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CHRISTIAN HOLINESS
AND ITS
CONSEQUENCE.

100.

CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

AND ITS

NECESSARY CONSEQUENCE;

OR A

RE-CONSIDERATION

OF THE

SENTIMENT THAT THE TERMINATION

OF THE

ENTAIL OF MORAL DEPRAVITY

IS THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE

OF THE

WESLEYAN DOCTRINE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION:

TOGETHER WITH A STATEMENT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND PROCEEDINGS CONNECTED WITH ITS

DEVELOPMENT & PUBLICATION.

BY THE

REV. NATHAN ROUSE.

Let me gain my calling's hope;
O make the sinner clean!
Dry corruption's fountain up,
Cut off the entail of sin.

Wesley's Hymns.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

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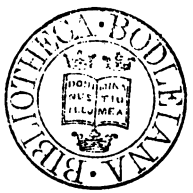
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PREFACE.

At the close of the Conference of 1861,—wishful to obtain any light that I could on the sentiment objected to in my work on "Man Contemplated," &c., and supposing, for reasons to be stated, that the Rev. J. W. Thomas could furnish some light, I wrote to solicit his kind assistance. Several letters passed between us. These letters, from the existing circumstances of the case, I regarded as strictly private, and, consequently, I kept the correspondence a perfect secret even from my most intimate friends. What was my surprise, then, on the reception of the following communication?—

"My dear Sir,

At the urgent, repeated, and continued solicitation of certain ministerial brethren, I have at length sent to the press the four letters I wrote to you on the subject of your theory, having varied an expression or two, either to make it more lucid and intelligible to the general reader, or less likely to hurt your feelings. I shall send you a copy as soon as it is printed.

Doubtless you have some notion of what the *cacocthes scribendi* is; and also, how difficult it is for an author to suppress what he has written. You will, therefore, I am sure, be neither surprised nor grieved (especially considering the spirit in which my letters are penned) that, having at your instance lighted my candle, instead of putting it under a bushel, I am setting it on a candlestick, "that it may give light to all that are in the house." This, you will perceive, is quite natural, and in the due course of authorship.

I remain. dear Sir, yours very truly,

Leek, Dec. 24, 1861. John W. Thomas."

From this communication it was evident that Mr. Thomas had made the correspondence tolerably public, and that he had

already committed his own part of it to the press. I had no objections whatever to a public and theological discussion of the theory in question, if both sides of it had been permitted to appear; but I did think that in the then existing position in which I stood, Mr. Thomas' publication of his letters was, to say the least, an ungenerous proceeding; nor did I believe that his *cacoethes scribendi* (rage for scribbling) was a sufficient justification. As to the "*urgent, repeated, and continued solicitation of certain ministerial brethren,*" I was equally surprised. Those ministerial brethren *knew* that the question was intended to remain at rest—so far as the public were concerned—until the following Conference, and how they could bring their minds to sanction, and even to urge a public attack upon me, under such circumstances, I could not conceive. This, however, was the third attack which had now been made upon me by Wesleyan agents, during the course of four months, although all the parties knew that I was pledged to silence. As, therefore, I had not the slightest idea, when I gave the pledge, that *Wesleyan ministers* and the *Watchman* would take the dishonourable advantage of my bonds, in order to strike at me; and as, moreover, the design of my silence, so far as I understood it, was now frustrated, I felt myself under no further obligation to allow such attacks to pass without some attempts at self-defence.

Under these circumstances I prepared a reply, both to Mr. Thomas and to some others. On further reflection, however, I resolved to lay aside the sheets, and to wait for the guidance of future events, which might possibly obviate the necessity of a reply altogether.

After some two or three months I found, to my utter astonishment, that the attack of Mr. Thomas was sanctioned by the editor of the Methodist Magazine, and that this was done at the "*almost imperative request*" of some ruling power. My confidence in the honour, or even in the common justice of the

leading men in Methodism, was now seriously shaken. In the course of a few weeks the District Meeting arrived, and the arbitrary proceedings of that meeting, and especially of two or three of its official members, convinced me that I was intended to be made a complete victim of Wesleyan intolerance, and that I was expected to remain silent until the deed should be accomplished. To this systematic and dishonourable abuse of my silence I could no longer submit, without ceasing to be a *man*, and becoming a mere *thing*, to be dealt with at pleasure. A few days after the close of the meeting, therefore, I informed the chairman of my intention of giving to the public a history of the whole affair; and I at once committed several of the prepared sheets to the press. In deference, however, to the wishes of two or three of my friends, who believed that the Conference would certainly condemn the dishonourable and harsh treatment which I had received, I again laid aside the sheets, although I felt tolerably sure that the Conference, instead of condemning, would sanction the proceedings of its own agents; and the result proved that I was not mistaken.

It would have been agreeable to me, if, in the composition of the ensuing pages, I could have repressed the statements of some of my correspondents; but I have a duty to perform both to myself and to the interests of Christian truth; and as those statements form an important part of the material furnished for my re-consideration of the theological question in dispute, the claims both of honesty and of common justice require that they should be given. I can assure the gentlemen referred to, however, that their *names*, as my correspondents, will never be known, nor will it be ever known that they hold the sentiments to which they have given expression, unless they divulge the secret themselves.

Nothing is more natural than for a man who writes under a deep sense of dishonourable and unjust treatment, to express himself strongly. I have done this; and could not, without

affectation, avoid it. If, however, I have expressed myself too strongly, or, if I have made any remarks uncalled for by the circumstances of the case, I am prepared to offer every reasonable apology.

In one respect, at least, I seem to myself to be in a position not unlike that of the bishop of Alexandria, of whom it was said, *Athanasius contra mundum*. Such a position is an exceedingly painful one; but when the rights of conscience and of mental freedom are involved, none, I apprehend, except a despot or a serf, will call it a dishonourable one. Some of the best men, both in ancient and modern times, have occupied a similar position; and no one more so, at one period, than John Wesley himself. To such a position, however, involving as it does mental independence, the Wesleyan Conference is, in its very constitution, essentially antagonistic, and will ever seek to crush, by every means in its power, the man who dares to sustain it. So thoroughly have I become convinced of this, that I have deemed it my duty, although at a most serious sacrifice, to resign my connection with that intolerant body. Could I have brought myself to practice mental reservation, as some of my ministerial brethren have suggested to me;—or, could I have prevailed on myself to copy the example of some of my reverend correspondents, and systematically to violate the dictates of professional and moral truth; I should have escaped the twelve months' Conferential crucifixion which I have had to endure—have retained my ecclesiastical position and advantages—and have been regarded at this moment as a loyal and worthy member of the Wesleyan priesthood. To such a system of Jesuitism, however, as it appeared to me, I was resolved not to stoop, whatever might be the cost; and as no other alternative presented itself, it is for this reason, in addition to some others which I have stated in the ensuing pages, that my relinquishment of all connection—not with the Wesleyan people—but with the Wesleyan Conference, is com-

plete and final. Even to the ministers, however, I trust that I entertain no feelings of resentment, and many of them I sincerely esteem; but in their District, and especially in their Conferential assemblies and proceedings, I have no wish ever to be associated with them again. I reflect with satisfaction on the course which I have taken; I have acknowledged God throughout the whole, and I believe that my steps have been guided, and that they will still be guided by the Lord.

Burslem, Oct. 20, 1862.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Circumstances connected with the development and publication of the sentiment. 9

CHAPTER II.

Notices and opinions of the sentiment, from its publication to the ensuing Conference, together with official proceedings 20

CHAPTER III.

Re-consideration of the sentiment, and the materials supplied for that purpose 39

CHAPTER IV.

Subsequent proceedings, and concluding observations 91

CHAPTER I.

CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLICATION OF THE SENTIMENT.

ABOUT fifteen years ago, the "Chart and Scale of Truth," by Dr. Tatham, came into my hands. The reading of this admirable production convinced me that the sacred scriptures are to the theologian, what the floral world is to the botanist, or what any other department of nature is to its student; and, therefore, that the Baconian system of induction is the only proper method by which to arrive at truth in theology, as well as in the sciences. Divesting myself, therefore, as far as possible, of prepossession in favour of any particular class of church sentiments, I commenced forthwith a re-investigation of the scriptures, with reference to all the commonly received doctrines of Christianity, and especially with reference to those which are peculiar to Methodism. Take, as an example of my method of proceeding, the doctrine of human depravity:—my question was not, what does such a theologian, or such a church teach on this subject? but, what do the scriptures teach? and in order to obtain a full and satisfactory answer, I sought out and collected all, or nearly all, the passages contained in the Bible bearing on the subject. Having done this, I proceeded to analyze every passage, and to write down the truth or truths contained in each; and then, combining all the various truths thus obtained in one sentence or definition, I regarded this as the infallible teaching of divine inspiration on the subject of human depravity. In this way I examined, *de novo*, all the doctrines of revelation seriatim, and

arrived at definite conclusions with reference to each. The process was tedious, and it occupied several years; but it was profitable both to my heart and to my intellect; and it terminated in a conviction of the truth of all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, as expounded by the venerable Wesley, which, I believe, nothing will ever shake.

In the course of these inquiries, the doctrine of entire sanctification—in consequence of its being peculiar to Methodism—arrested special attention. At the time, I had no very deep impressions on the subject; and the fact that, for sixteen hundred years, no Christian church had ever propounded such a doctrine, was, to say the least, calculated to suggest a doubt as to its correctness. With all my just veneration too for Mr. Wesley,—and in this I do not yield to any man living,—I could not avoid the thought, that as he had erred with regard to the resurrection of brutes, and the commencement of the millennium, it was possible that he also might have erred on the subject of entire sanctification; and then I was quite conscious that if the voice of Christian antiquity, or the verdict of modern churches, were to decide the question, the doctrine must at once be abandoned. As, however, I had no confidence in the infallibility either of ancient or modern churches, and as, moreover, I had a deep conviction that there are truths contained in the scriptures, just as there are in nature, which nothing but time and patient study can develope, I determined to make the scriptures my only text book, and to pursue my inquiry irrespective both of Mr. Wesley's views on the one hand, and of church creeds on the other. The result—after many months' investigation and serious thought—was a settled conviction that the restoration of man in this world to a state of sinless purity, is the design of redemption; and thus the statements of Mr. Wesley, that entire sanctification is a present deliverance from the power and root of sin—a new and clean heart, by which the struggle between the old and new man is over—and a restoration of the

soul to its primitive health, its primeval purity—became with me the correct expression of a deeply fixed and permanent religious sentiment. This doctrine I maintain as the grand crowning glory of New Testament Christianity; and every creed that either denies or ignores it, I regard as essentially defective, if not positively corrupt.

In further considering this doctrine, however, a consequence presented itself, for which I was not prepared, namely, that if two parents should be thus sanctified, the transmission of moral depravity to their offspring would be an impossibility. This, at the time, was to me a new idea, as I had no recollection of ever having met with it in any author whatever; and because it was new, it staggered me; but how to dispose of it I could not divine. The more I contemplated it, the more unmanageable it appeared, and very speedily it assumed the following syllogistic form:—

That which does not exist, cannot be transmitted:

But in entirely sanctified parents, moral depravity does not exist:

Therefore, by such parents, moral depravity cannot be transmitted.

Such a conclusion, I knew full well, was at variance with the general sentiments of the Wesleyan body, and it was no less at variance with all my own previous modes of thinking; but still I saw no method by which it might consistently be disposed of; and to blink it I could not, without ceasing to be an honest man. This state of perplexity continued, and for three or four months I kept the subject absolutely to myself, in the hope that some ray of light from some quarter or other, would relieve me from the power of an argument, which, unsolicited and unexpected, had forced itself upon my attention.

The doctrinal consequence now in question occurred to me more than six years ago. I was then in the Wednesbury circuit; and having confidence in the ability and kindness of my

superintendent and colleagues, I ventured at length to introduce my difficulty to their notice, and to ask them for a solution. But I found that it perplexed them as much as it perplexed me; and one of them candidly admitted, that although he could not embrace the conclusion, he did not see how the argument could be disposed of. After two or three conversations on the subject, at different times, with precisely the same result, I began to think that the perplexing sentiment involved a truth, although unacknowledged, at least so far as I could learn.

Subsequently to these conversations, some twelve or fifteen months elapsed, during which period I never introduced the subject to any person; not that I had lost sight of it, for the fact is, that it was seldom absent from my thoughts; and in the course of my reading, I was continually on the alert to find something that would assist in the settlement of my own views, either one way or the other.

Shortly after my arrival in the Rochester circuit, I read the "Christian Doctrine of Sin," by Dr. Muller; and in which he states, that if the sanctification of parents were to become perfect in this world, such parents would certainly transmit their sanctified nature to their offspring. Here, then, at length, I met with something bearing directly on the subject which had so long occupied my thoughts, and which, proceeding from one of the most eminent of modern theologians, could not fail to deepen my impression of the validity of my own argument. My views, however, notwithstanding, were as yet far from being settled. I supposed that there must be some weighty consideration, which had altogether escaped my notice, and which, if I could get hold of it, would at once reduce my logical argument to an absurdity. I then wrote to two eminent ministers of our own church, stated my difficulty without the slightest disguise, and solicited their kind assistance in helping me out of it. They both replied in the most respectful manner; but

their replies appeared to me to leave the real difficulty untouched, and were, therefore, quite unsatisfactory. One of them, indeed, evidently conscious, as it seemed to me, that if the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification were admitted, the doctrine of the excision of the entail of depravity would be inevitable,—intimated that entire sanctification in this world is unattainable. This was not untying the knot, but cutting it. I knew perfectly well, that an abandonment of the doctrine of entire sanctification, would relieve me of my difficulty at once; but then to have done this, would have been to abandon one of our own essential doctrines, and one which I firmly believed, in order to escape the consequence. The abandonment of the doctrine was, therefore, with me, impossible. What I wanted to know was, how I was to escape the consequence, and yet hold the doctrine; and this was the very point which both those gentlemen left untouched.

Although hitherto unsuccessful, I still entertained the impression, that my difficulty was capable of a solution. My next recourse, therefore, was to one of the oldest and most distinguished of all our ministers. After stating my difficulty, I remarked that I did not recollect having met with anything on the subject in the works of Mr. Wesley, and that I should be greatly obliged if he would give me his own views upon it. In his reply, he directed my attention to Mr. Wesley's tract on Christian Perfection, in which he hoped that I should find my difficulty fully solved. I at once turned to the tract, and found the observations referred to. These observations I had read some years before, but they had escaped my recollection. They, however, contained nothing but what had previously occurred to my own mind; and, as an argument, they appeared to me to be altogether inconclusive. In a second letter, therefore, I took the liberty of stating wherein I thought the argument failed to meet the requirements of the case; and solicited that if my objections were deemed invalid, their invalidity

would be freely pointed out. To my second letter, as to my first, I received a most respectful and kind reply; but as it did not point out any invalidity in my course of reasoning, and left, as I thought, the main difficulty unsolved, I did not think it necessary to trespass any further upon the kindness of my esteemed and venerable correspondent. In a letter of acknowledgment, however, I stated that the idea had occurred to me, of elaborating the whole of my argument on the subject for the press; but that if I did so, I would transmit to him the completed sheets, prior to their publication.

After this correspondence, I allowed more than twelve months to pass, for further consideration, before I commenced the composition of "Man Contemplated," &c. During this period, I had an interview with a lay gentleman, who was a contributor to the London Review, and to whom I introduced the subject of my difficulty. In the course of the conversation he informed me that the same difficulty, some time previously, had occurred to him—that an examination of the subject had fully convinced him, that the doctrine of entire sanctification, as taught by Mr. Wesley, necessarily involved the doctrine of the excision of the entail of depravity—and, that rather than embrace such a consequence, he had renounced the doctrine of entire sanctification altogether. These statements, proceeding from a cool and calculating Christian philosopher, had considerable effect upon me; they strengthened my yet wavering confidence in the conclusiveness of my own argument; but so thoroughly had I convinced myself of the truth of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification, that on that point they produced no impression whatever.

Passing over a few incidental remarks in an interview with other two lay gentlemen, my next conversation of any importance, was with one of our own superintendent ministers, with whom I had an opportunity of spending part of an evening at his own house. Having introduced the subject, I stated the

conclusion to which I had been compelled to arrive, and then asked for his candid judgment upon it. In reply, he observed, that some years previously the subject had occupied his serious attention; that he had arrived at precisely the same conclusion that I had; and that ever since he had held that conclusion as a scripture truth. I now found that I was not alone in my views, as at first I had supposed; that other minds, as well as my own, had perceived an inseparable connection between entire sanctification, and the cessation of the transmission of depravity; and that, while some had set aside the latter doctrine by denying the truth of the former, I had met with one, at least, who consistently maintained both the doctrine of entire sanctification, and its necessary consequence.

Some time after this, having elaborated the whole argument on the subject in question, I gave the sheets into the hands of another of our ministers, requesting that he would make a note of everything which he deemed either inconclusive or unscriptural. After a while he returned the sheets, but without a single note; and in a subsequent interview he stated, that he did not see how my arguments could be subverted, except by a denial of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.

My next step was to send the sheets to the venerable minister to whom I have previously referred. I accordingly sent them, accompanied by the following letter:—

"Rev. and esteemed Dr. Having written out at some length what has suggested itself to my own mind, on the subject relative to which I wrote to you some time ago, I beg to submit the sheets to your consideration, in the hope that you will kindly look them over; and if it will not be too great a trespass on your valuable time, if you will also favour me with any remarks that you may deem necessary, I shall be greatly obliged. I am not conscious of having conducted the argument under the influence of any feeling, except that of a supreme regard for scripture truth; but if in your judgment

there is any appearance to the contrary, your correction will be received with all that sincere deference which your high character and eminent position demand.

I am, &c. N. ROUSE."

In about three weeks the manuscript was returned, accompanied by a letter, the whole tone of which was characterized by the greatest respect and kindness. The entire letter is too long to insert. The following extract, however, contains the substance of its argument:—"My mind is not able to yield its assent to the doctrine which you advocate with so much acuteness in the papers now on my table. I do not hold myself responsible for all the objections to that doctrine which you recite, but I rest on a general view of our fall and recovery, comprehending a history of God's great economy from the time of man's first transgression to the final consummation of all things. I cannot but hold that every man is born under the law of his relation to the first Adam, viewed as the head and representative of all our race; and that in consequence of this, and not simply of his relation to his immediate progenitors, he is born in original sin, or in a state of hereditary guilt, as denoting obligation to punishment, and of hereditary depravity." With my arguments the letter does not profess to deal, and thus, so far as I could see, it left me in full possession of the ground which I had taken.

Not yet satisfied, however, and unwilling to publish until I had adopted every possible means to be corrected, if I were in error, I sent the manuscript of the whole work to the Book-room Committee. In doing this, I supposed that I was committing it into the hands of the Conference, since that Committee is appointed by the Conference. I did so, not with any expectation that they would publish the work, but for the purpose of giving them an opportunity of offering any objections to its sentiments which they might think proper. The manuscript was retained for three months, at the expiration of which

it was returned, but without a single syllable of objection. I was informed, however, but not officially, that several members of the Committee wished to have it published; and at the ensuing Conference, which followed immediately, two or three of the members of that Committee spoke to me on the subject, and expressed a hope that I would publish it. One of them in particular, and one of the most eminent ministers in London too, gave me some directions as to its publication. He stated, however, that there were a few sentences in it that he should like to see altered. I asked him if those sentences related to the cutting off the entail of depravity, and he said, No. I then pressed him to point out the sentences to which he objected, but he declined, and advised me to send the manuscript to Mr. —, adding, "He is thoroughly up in all the points to which I refer—he will give you his candid judgment, and you may rely upon it."

Perfectly willing to comply with this advice, as soon as the affairs of Conference were settled, I sent the manuscript to the gentleman in question, inclosing a note, requesting any criticisms that he thought proper to make. In the course of a few weeks the sheets were returned, and the next post brought the following letter:—

"My dear Sir,—I dispatched your M.S. by the Midland Railway last evening, and shall be glad to hear that it has reached you in safety. In the first place, permit me to thank you very cordially for allowing me to read it. The important topics which it embraces—the variety of valuable information which it contains—the points of controversy which it opens—the luminous and vigorous style in which it is written—and the devout and earnest tone of sentiment and feeling by which it is pervaded, have afforded me a very high, and almost unmingled gratification. I think you will confer a favour on the reading public by publishing it; at the same time you must reckon on a tremendous shelling from the ramparts of

orthodoxy. In many of your corrections of the popular notions of man's normal state—in your general exposition of the effects of the fall—in your doctrine of the nature of redemption—and in your strictures on Cummingism, I thoroughly concur. I confess, however, that your theory of the cutting off the entail of depravity, still staggers me. It seems to me, 1st, to confound a moral with a physical law—2nd, to make every parent a federal head—3rd, to answer no practical end. I can understand how the maxim, "like produces like," may be predicated of matter, but I do not see how it can be predicated of mind. Then, again, as I read the scriptures, especially St. Paul, I am born under a liability to punishment, and with a corrupt nature, not because my father and my mother were sinners, but because my representative, Adam, was a sinner. And further, as you admit all children are born members of the mystical body of Christ, is not the entail of guilt and depravity more effectually cut off in him, than it could be in any, even the holiest parents?

I am, &c. ——."

On the latter part of this letter, I shall offer some remarks in the chapter on the re-consideration of the subject.

Having now stated the facts contained in the preceding pages, I appeal to a candid religious public—whether any person could have taken greater pains than I did to arrive at truth on the subject in question? At first, the sentiment to me was new, and at variance with all my previous modes of thinking. It originated in the contemplation of the grand and ultimate designs of redemption, and it presented itself as the inevitable consequence of our own doctrine of entire sanctification. For more than four years it was the subject of anxious inquiry. Supposing that the syllogistic form in which it suggested itself to my mind, involved some unperceived fallacy, I made use of every means within my reach, both by conversation and cor-

respondence with eminent men, to discover wherein the supposed fallacy consisted; but I could discover none, nor did any of those with whom I communicated attempt to point one out; on the contrary, I found that some of them candidly admitted their inability to do so, and that others of them had previously arrived at the same conclusion that I had. I viewed, and reviewed, again and again, every argument and objection on both sides that I could possibly discover or obtain; but every step was an advance in opposition to my previous prejudices. And then, finally, I submitted my elaborated argument, with a reply to objections, to the highest authorities in our Connexion, but still no part of my reasoning was pointed out as inconclusive, nor was a single answer to objections even attempted to be rebutted. During the latter part of these proceedings, although it was known that I contemplated publication, not a single intimation was given from any quarter that I ought not to publish; on the contrary, several of our ministers advised me to publish, and spoke of the work in far higher terms than I supposed that it merited.

I leave the question now to the judgment of others, and especially to that of the Wesleyan Conference, how far I am censurable for the course which I adopted in the publication of "Man Contemplated," &c., and I shall cheerfully abide by their decision.

CHAPTER II.

NOTICES AND OPINIONS OF THE SENTIMENT, FROM ITS PUBLICATION TO THE ENSUING CONFERENCE, TOGETHER WITH OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS.

Having published my work under the circumstances narrated in the preceding chapter, I felt considerable interest, but no anxiety, as to the manner in which my arguments on the cutting off the entail of depravity, would be treated by the various Reviewers. In the commencement of the section on this subject, I had stated that if my arguments were unscriptural and inconclusive, their unscriptural and inconclusive character could be pointed out and made manifest, and that the moment this was done, I would at once relinquish them; but that mere assertion, &c., could have no influence on a mind accustomed to look at evidence, and to form its judgment accordingly. I expected, therefore, that the Reviewers would adopt one of the three following courses,—1st, that they would fairly grapple with my arguments and overturn them—or 2ndly, that they would admit their validity—or 3rdly, that they would let them alone altogether; and I was simple enough to expect one of these courses from our own Reviewers especially, as the arguments are founded chiefly upon one of our own standard doctrines. I had sought to be perfectly candid throughout the whole proceeding, and I expected, as a matter of course, to meet with candour from Wesleyan Reviewers; but in this I was doomed to experience disappointment.

The first Notice, so far as our own periodicals are concerned, was by the Editors of the *Watchman*. But this, instead of meeting my simple expectation, appeared to me to be utterly

unworthy of the pretensions of that paper. It did not touch a single argument, contained no reasoning, but pronounced condemnation, and was written in the style of some autocrat, who imagines that his bare dictum is sufficient. As this Notice gave neither the title of the book, nor the name of its author, I wrote to ask—in connection with an advertisement that I sent—if the Editors would have the kindness to inform me whether the Notice in question referred to "Man Contemplated," &c., and I received the following *polite* reply:—"Rev. Sir,—I am instructed by the Editors to inform you that your advertisement is respectfully declined. I am," &c.

Relative to the proceedings consequent upon this communication, adopted both by myself and the Editors, it is unnecessary to enter into any detail, as they are already known to the public. I may remark, however, that although these Editors filled nearly two columns with observations on my theory, as it is called, they chose to deal with anything rather than the arguments on which I had based my conclusion. They made some statements, it is true, on the difference between generic and individual characteristics, as bearing on the maxim that like produces like; but these statements left the real question at issue altogether unaffected. I had maintained that moral qualities are transmitted, and that like produces its like in holiness as well as in depravity; their business, therefore, manifestly was to shew that moral qualities are not transmitted; or that if they are, that the law of transmission is restricted to bad moral qualities only. This is the question they were required to deal with; and yet this is the question which they never touched. It is an easy thing to make a shew of learning by writing *about* a subject, and it is easier still to make a shew of religion by depreciating logic and philosophy. A child can iterate the well known articles of its creed, and the simplest old woman in the kingdom can advise people to keep to their bibles; but all this kind of stuff, to whatever amount it may

be heaped up, and proper as it may be on a proper occasion, is no answer to an argument, and as applicable to the question at issue, it is altogether out of place. Did the Editors mean to insinuate that I had less veneration for the scriptures than they had? or that I had devoted less attention to them than they? The fact is, that almost every argument which I had employed, is a scriptural argument; and one of our own acknowledged doctrines is the chief basis on which I rested my conclusion. Herein, I apprehend, consisted the real difficulty to these gentlemen; and, therefore, under such circumstances, to advise me to lay aside logic and philosophy, and to keep to the scriptures, was merely to throw dust, in the hope that the true question would be lost sight of. I may be mistaken, but I am still of opinion, that these gentlemen owed it both to themselves and to me, as well as to the Methodist public, either to let the question alone, or to deal with it argumentatively and candidly, and not merely to denounce it and nibble at it in the manner in which they did. I had studied it rather too long, to be either satisfied or silenced by such a futile proceeding.

The next of our periodicals which took up the subject was the *Methodist Recorder;* and here it was a relief to find that my views were, in the main, fairly represented. The writer stated, indeed, as was to be expected, that my arguments had failed to convince him; and perceiving the importance of entire sanctification as the foundation on which some of those arguments rested, he stated also that I appeared to labour under serious misapprehension with regard to the nature of the doctrine, and that I had failed to give due attention to those guards and limitations which are so necessary to be observed. The article closed, however, with something like an implied menace. Speaking of occasional instances of divergence from our acknowledged standards of doctrine, the writer mentions Dr. Adam Clarke as a conspicuous example, and then adds,—"Among lesser men, we could name one who published some rash specu-

tions, tending to call in question the Divine foreknowledge, for which he received at once a reply and a castigation in an article written by Richard Watson."

On the subject of the above review, I wrote a letter to the *Recorder*, which was at once kindly inserted. I called the attention of the writer to that part of the article especially where he stated, that I appeared to be labouring under serious misapprehension with regard to the nature of entire sanctification. I informed him that I was not at all aware of any difference between my views and those of Mr. Wesley on that subject; but that if I was under some mistake, I should be exceedingly glad to be corrected, and to discover that the serious misapprehension was exclusively my own. In answer to this I received a private communication, in which the writer stated, that he admired both the ability and candour of my book, although he sincerely thought me to be in error, and that St. Paul, as I had described him, was an ideal character; but he respectfully declined to enter upon the subject of my inquiry. Now this was the very point on which all my respected opponents had fought shy. My position was, that the doctrine of entire sanctification, as defined by *Mr. Wesley*, necessarily involved the cutting off the entail of depravity. It was with Mr. Wesley's views of sanctification, therefore, with which the *Recorder* had to do, and to which, if I mistake not, the statement of serious misapprehension really applied. I should like to ask the writer of that article, if he admits, *bona fide*, the definitions of Mr. Wesley, as the true and correct statement of that doctrine. I make this remark, because I know some of our ministers who do not; and I have reason to believe that some of the opposition that I have experienced has arisen from a secret antagonism to entire sanctification as taught by Mr. Wesley himself. That doctrine is either true, or it is not true. If it is not true, let it be openly and honourably abandoned; but if it is true, let it be maintained, and let the consequence that I have pointed out be either fairly rebutted, or candidly admitted.

That Mr. Watson gave a conclusive and an unanswerable reply to the author referred to, admits of no doubt. As to the castigation, I have no distinct recollection; and, perhaps, it would have been as well if this word had been omitted, since its employment can answer no purpose, either with regard to that author, or to myself. Let any Wesleyan Minister, or lay gentleman either, reply to the fifth section of the fourth chapter of "Man Contemplated," &c., as conclusively as Mr. Watson replied to the work on "Divine Prescience," and then he may castigate as long and as severely as he pleases, without a word of complaint from me. I have no objections whatever to a castigation *with* a reply; it is to a castigation *without* a reply, and *instead* of a reply, to which I object, as unchristian and unjust. Have I not publicly stated, that the moment my arguments are fairly replied to, I will give them up? and what more can a reasonable man require? Wesley, on the subject of entire sanctification—Luther, on salvation by faith—and Huss, on the doctrine of the eucharist, all took this ground, and we admire them for it; mere castigation, and even persecution, in their case, were powerless; they wanted arguments, nothing else could move them from their position; and because arguments were not forthcoming, they maintained their sentiments to the end of life, and thus they obtained an establishment in Christendom, which will continue to the end of time.

About the time that my correspondence with the *Watchman* and the *Recorder* was going on, I received a letter from one of the most intelligent and well-read laymen in one of the midland circuits. He informed me that he read my book with considerable interest, and was quite prepared to say that, in his judgment, I had fully sustained my chief conclusion both by reason and scripture.

Shortly after this, I had an interview with one of our ministers. My published views on the excision of the entail of depravity, were of course the subject of conversation; and I

found him far less reserved in the expression of opinion than I had reason to anticipate. He told me that he did not admit the correctness of Mr. Wesley's definitions, either of human depravity, or of entire sanctification; "but," said he, "if I were to admit them, I should be bound, in consistency, to admit your conclusion." And he further stated, "I do not believe that any man who admits those definitions, will ever be able to overturn that conclusion." In regard to this conversation, I felt considerable difficulty in attempting to comprehend how a minister who rejected Mr. Wesley's definitions of two important doctrines, could, nevertheless, give an affirmative answer to the question proposed every year, "Do you believe and preach our doctrines?" Subsequently, however, the Rev. John Wesley Thomas furnished me with the solution, and which I shall notice in its proper place.

The next circumstance that arrested my attention, was a communication which informed me that the Rev. J. W. Thomas had placed my book in the *Index Expurgatorius;* pronounced that I ought to be punished; and threatened, that if no one else would arraign me before the Conference, he would. This was immediately followed by a communication from the chairman of the Lincoln District, accompanied by a copy of a condemnatory resolution, passed by the May District Meeting, relative to my circular letter to the Editors of the *Watchman*, and which resolution was intended to be read at the Conference. A few days elapsed, and I received another communication from the chairman of the Macclesfield District, containing an official notice that he would bring the subject of my book before the ensuing Conference. And then from yet another source, I received intelligence, that it was the intention of some of the members of Conference to treat me with the greatest severity. These, it will be admitted, were tidings sufficient to make an ordinary man quail; and it would be mere affectation on my part to say, that they did not produce a considerable amount of anxiety. And

what had I done to involve myself in this painful position? Was my moral or my religious character impeached? Had I been unfaithful in my office, either as a Christian Minister, or a Wesleyan Superintendent? Had I violated any requirement, either human or divine? Not a syllable on any of these points was even intimated. I had ventured, after five years of patient inquiry and study of the scriptures, to come to the conclusion, that Christ, in the economy of redemption, had made provision for the utter extermination of sin from the face of the earth, and that the cutting off the entail of sin is the necessary consequence of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification. This, and this only, so far as I could understand, was the huge offence of which I had been guilty; and for this I was threatened with severe ecclesiastical punishment. As, however, I had the deep consciousness of having endeavoured to act a candid and a Christian part throughout, I awaited the result without any feelings either of disaffected hostility to my fathers and brethren on the one hand, or of servile timidity on the other. I sought for neither counsel nor sympathy from any quarter, and I received none. I pursued my work, and discharged my duties in the circuit, as though nothing had occurred; and not a single individual ever heard a syllable on the subject from me.

In the letter which I received from the chairman of the Macclesfield District, and as a reason for arraigning me before the Conference, the following observations occur:—"If I do not misunderstand your theory, it throws you upon this dilemma; either that your doctrine of entire sanctification is a moral abstraction, without personal realization, or that there must be human beings who have come into the world without a sinful nature, to whom consequently the agencies and requirements of the gospel are inapplicable, who do not need to repent, to be born again, to be renewed in the spirit of their minds, who ought not to suffer, or to die."

In reply to this I remark, 1st, that my doctrine of entire sanc-

tification is that of Mr. Wesley, and no one as ever yet attempted to show that it is not; and, therefore, if my doctrine is a moral abstraction, without personal realization, so is that of Mr. Wesley.

I remark, 2ndly, that my doctrine does not imply that there must be human beings who *have* come into the world without a sinful nature. It implies only that Christ, in the economy of redemption, has made provision that human beings *may* come into the world without a sinful nature, just as he has made provision for the whole world to be filled with righteousness as the waters cover the sea, although such is not yet the case.

I remark, 3rdly, that to be born without a sinful nature does *not* render the agencies and requirements of the gospel inapplicable. For, in the first place, to be born without a sinful nature is the result of gospel provision; and in the second place, gospel provision is essential to the end of life, to preserve that nature from becoming sinful.

I remark, 4thly, that if every human being to the end of time *must* personally repent, then every human being to the end of time *must* personally commit sin, in order to render repentance necessary. But if every human being to the end of time *must* personally commit sin, then sin is a moral necessity; and if sin be a moral necessity, then it is no longer sin; for the very essence of sin consists in the fact that it is not necessary.

I remark, 5thly, that the scriptures no where teach that every human being, to the end of time, must personally be born again. They teach most expressly that that which is born of the flesh, i.e. of depraved humanity, must be born again; but they never teach that that which is born of the spirit, must be born again; and every child born of entirely sanctified parents, *is* born of the spirit, not only in the legitimate sense in which I have explained that passage, but in a still higher sense, for I maintain that the operations of the Divine Spirit are concerned in everything connected with the production of an offspring by holy parents.

I remark, finally, that holiness, during a state of probation, constitutes neither a necessary nor a natural exemption from either suffering or death. Our first parents, even in their holy condition, were *naturally* liable both to some amount of suffering, and to death. This, I believe, I have sufficiently proved in my work on Man Contemplated, &c. To suppose, therefore, that a holy God has made the transmission of moral depravity to the end of time, necessary and inevitable, because he has constituted the material body naturally liable to suffering and death, is to confound things which are essentially different, and which no more bear the relation of cause and effect, than the pain occasioned by a broken limb is the effect of a guilty conscience. Besides, Christian parents, although they may be as sinless as Adam was, are nevertheless liable to both suffering and death; and, therefore, as like produces like, their offspring, although equally sinless, are naturally liable to the same.

I come now to notice the critique on my work inserted in the *London Review* for July, 1861, and which came into my hands about three weeks before the Conference. In my circular letter I had stated that a contributor to the *London Review* had advised me to publish my book. The Editors of the *Watchman*, surprised at this statement, observed;—"This being so, the case becomes rather serious, and we submit that the *London Review*, the name of which has been in so unusual a way obtruded on the public, owes to Methodism a far larger and more thorough examination than we, as laymen, can afford to Mr. Rouse's theory." In my reply to the Editors of the *Watchman* I remarked;—"For the purpose of bringing the question fairly before the public, I sincerely hope that the *London* reviewers will take up the subject, but I have no expectation that they will. Do you imagine that those gentlemen have no more prudence than to commit themselves to an attempt to prove, that that which does not exist, can nevertheless be transmitted; or, in other words, that a thing can be, and not be, at the same time?"

The *London Review*, however, contrary to my expectation, took up the subject. But how has it taken it up? Has it given "a far larger and more thorough examination" of the subject than the *Watchman* had given? Has it proved, or even attempted to prove, that that which does not exist can nevertheless be transmitted? Has it shewn, or even attempted to shew, that the cutting off the entail of depravity, is not a necessary consequence of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification? In a word, has it replied, or even attempted to reply, to any one of the seven arguments by which I had sustained my conclusion? These are the objects to which the writer of that article was in justice committed; and yet I appeal to the common understanding of every unprejudiced reader, and ask, whether any one of these objects has either been accomplished, or even attempted to be accomplished? The writer had evidently another object in view, and which would cost immeasurably less trouble than a reply, namely, to damage both the book and its author; and hence I am represented as supporting principles that are *crude*, *unscientific* and *unscriptural*—as propounding a theory so *coarsely*, so *revoltingly material*, that he cannot bring himself to print the words in which it is expressed—as being ignorant of the well-established results of scientific investigation—as being *extremely superficial* in my views—as having understood Dr. Muller in directly the opposite sense in which he is to be understood—as having looked upon depravity as a *material force*, if not as a *material deposit*—as giving interpretations of scripture which are *specimens of superficial, unspiritual rationalizing*, exceeding anything to be found in Kuinoel—as having a conception of sanctification that is *vitally defective*—and as having published *crude speculations* which he hopes I shall soon abandon.

Such, I presume, is a fair representation of the style and character of the article with which the conductors of the *London Review* have thought proper to adorn their pages. It re-

minds me very much of the style and manner in which Toplady and Lavington attacked the novel and unpalatable sentiments of Mr. Wesley, only that in Toplady and Lavington there was something like argument, whereas in the article in question there is none.

There are a few statements in this article, however, on which it may not be improper to make a few remarks. The first is, that I teach the doctrine of "'immaculate conception' on a scale which reduces the modern Romish dogma to insignificance." The design of this statement cannot be mistaken, and it is unworthy of any man who makes the least pretensions to candour. The writer knew that the sentiment which I have put forth has scarcely any analogy to the Romish dogma of immaculate conception; but then it suited his purpose to keep this absence of analogy out of sight. Waving this, however, I would ask, what objections has the writer to the doctrine of immaculate conception? Does he not admit, that if our first parents had continued immaculate, their children would have been born immaculate? And does he not also admit that our Lord was born holy? If so, then he admits the doctrine of immaculate conception. And since our Lord, the second Adam, was born immaculate, is the writer prepared to say, that in this fact, the second Adam did not furnish an intimation that he intended to restore human nature, in its propagation, to the immaculate condition which it originally sustained? Our Lord, by his holy nature, as well as by his holy life, "condemned sin in the flesh;" and is the writer prepared to say, that by his holy birth, he did not condemn hereditary depravity? That any mere human being *has* ever been born holy, I have neither affirmed nor intimated: all that I have contended for is, that Christ has made provision for it in the economy of redemption, and that it is the necessary consequence of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.

The second is the statement that the ideas which I have

put forth are not new, and that they have been expressly related in the writings of theologians. It is very possible that the theological reading of the London reviewer may be far more extensive than my own, though I may be permitted to doubt it. I have never seen or heard of a book in which my arguments are either refuted or even stated, and I doubt whether the reviewer has. My arguments are founded on the doctrine of entire sanctification as taught by Mr. Wesley; but this doctrine had no recognized existence, until Mr. Wesley promulgated it, as a discovery of his own, from the study of the scriptures; and, therefore, as neither my views nor my arguments could scarcely be conceived, and much less stated, prior to the development of the doctrine on which they are founded, it is manifest that there could be no refutation of them prior to that time. That there has been a refutation of them since, I do not believe; and the reviewer will have to give the evidence, author, volume, and page, before I shall believe it. Beside, if my arguments have been expressly refuted in the writings of theologians, how is it that the reviewer has not employed some of those express refutations?—how is it, that instead of attempting a fair and honourable refutation of my arguments, he has contented himself with a mere tirade, not the most creditable either to his own pretensions, or to those of the *London Review*. Such a course of proceeding suggests at least a suspicion that the statement which he has put forth is nothing more than an adventure, intended to save himself from the trouble of performing his own task.

The third statement is that which relates to what the reviewer calls my theory of the propagation of souls, and which he pronounces to be coarsely and revoltingly material. I beg to say that the theory is not exclusively mine. It is the theory also of Mr. Wesley, (vol. iii. p. 398, vol. ix. p. 368, 319, fourth edition,) of Mr. Fletcher, (vol. i. p. 126, &c., seventh edition,) and of every Wesleyan Minister, except the London reviewer,

and perhaps a few others, who have thrown this part of Methodism overboard, and now seek to impose upon the public by representing it as *my theory*.

The fourth statement is that in which he affirms, that Dr. Muller teaches a doctrine precisely the contrary of that which I have ascribed to him. The quotations from Muller I have given in Man Contemplated, &c., p. 232, 233. Now I maintain that, in the first of these quotations, Muller expressly teaches, that if human nature were pure, the nature of its propagation would be pure too; and that in the second, he teaches that if the depravity of parents were completely removed by sanctification in this world, their offspring would be born in the same restored condition. I appeal to the understanding of every unprejudiced reader, for the correctness of this view, and I challenge the London reviewer to make common sense of the quotations on any other principle.

The fifth statement is, that Mr. Rouse's conception of the nature of sanctification is vitally defective. I beg to reply, that my views of entire sanctification are those of Mr. Wesley, so that the expression "vitally defective," applies to him as well as to me. It would, however, be interesting to know what opinions the reviewer entertains on this subject. It will not, perhaps, be presuming too much to suppose, that as a conductor of the *London Review*, he subscribes to the statements of the preceding article; and there the writer, at page 555, speaking of "complete sanctification," remarks, "I suspect that it has never been realized." Mr. Wesley, in his Journals and Letters, informs us of some scores of persons who had obtained the blessing of entire sanctification; but the writer in question suspects that all these accounts are, in fact, a delusion, and, consequently, that Mr. Wesley was in reality an injudicious and credulous old man. This is Wesleyan orthodoxy of a prime character, and the *London Review* has the credit of it. It appears, therefore, that however "vitally defective" I am

in my views, Mr. Wesley, too, according to the *London Review*, was vitally defective in his views, in more respects than one.

The sixth statement is a concession:—"That, in some way, *the character of the offspring is conditioned by the character, as well as by the constitution, of the parents*, may probably be the case." Now this is the very principle for which I have contended. It is, in fact, the principle that like parents produce like children. As to the *modus operandi* by which this is effected, I have never professed to know anything, any more than I have professed to know the *modus operandi* of any other mysterious process. I have contended only for the *fact*, that the character aud constitution of the parents, condition the character and constitution of the offspring; and, consequently, that as parents of a depraved character and constitution, produce children of a depraved character and constitution, so parents of a holy character and constitution will produce children of a holy character and constitution. But, says the *London Review*, "Facts contradict, and philosophy disowns, Mr. Rouse's theory." I reply, that the *philosophy* of the *Review* certainly does not disown it, for it admits that the character of the offspring is conditional by the character, as well as by the constitution, of the parents. That *facts*, however, contradict it, I at once acknowledge; but then, facts also, according to the *London Review*, contradict the doctrine of entire sanctification; for although the writer admits that God has made provision for entire sanctification, he suspects that it has never been realized. If, therefore, the truth of a scripture doctrine is to be determined by facts, the doctrine that God has made provision for the complete sanctification of man, as well as the doctrine that God has made provision for holy parents to produce a holy offspring, will have to be abandoned. I may be a very superficial reasoner, as the London reviewer affirms again and again, and he may be a very profound reasoner, but the unprejudiced reader will judge both of my superficiality and of the reviewer's profundity.

The last statement that I shall notice, relates to the supposed absurdity of my theory as applicable to the offspring of parents whose moral condition is not equal. After proposing a variety of questions on this subject, the reviewer observes;—"Or suppose one (parent) is entirely sanctified, and the other but partially, or not at all, what then? Here we have indeed new and strange problems relating to the composition of forces," I beg, in reply, to ask,—suppose one parent has a sound and vigorous constitution, and the other has a radically diseased one, in what condition will the child be born? Or, suppose one parent to be a fine steed, and the other a jackass, of what species will the foal be born? Or, further, suppose that a vessel of clear liquid be combined with a vessel of muddy liquid, what then? Here we have, indeed, new and strange problems relating to the composition of forces. And yet, strange as they may be, I apprehend that every man of ordinary intelligence can answer them. If it be said, that there is no analogy between the operation of moral, and the operation of physical laws, I demand the proof; but the reviewer will be the last man to attempt such a proof, for he admits not only that depraved parents produce a depraved offspring, but also that the character of the offspring is conditioned by the character, as well as by the constitution, of his parents; and, consequently, by the various differences of character and constitution.

There are several other statements in this review of Man Contemplated, &c. on which I might remark, but it is unnecessary, as they are nearly all of a similar character. The design of the article, indeed, throughout, no one can fail to perceive. In addition to the expressions, "crude," "unscientific," "unscriptural," "vitally defective," "extremely superficial," and such like, which are continually occurring, there is also a considerable amount of misrepresentation. Suffice it to say, that this review, which was thoroughly to investigate the subject, deals just about as equitably with Man Contemplated, &c., as

Joseph Barker's review of the Bible deals with the sacred writings.

Shortly after the appearance of the review which I have now noticed, I received a communication from one of our ministers, and from which I give the following extracts, as they contain a correct statement of the real point in dispute. "I am in hope, that should a conversation take place at the Conference on the subject of transmission, it will not be with the hurry and declamation that the reviewers indulge. This, though it may be all that to them the subject needs, will never give satisfaction to those who are interested in the solution of the question. As I do not agree with the doctrine of children being born sinless, I am disposed to question, *not your conclusion*, but the *premises* from which it is drawn. It seems to me that all hinges here. Is that perfection which is attainable in this life, *an entire destruction of the root and principle of sin?* The reviewers do not seem to trouble themselves about this material question sufficiently, either to make one doubt it, or believe it. If you can shew that Mr. Wesley teaches perfection in your sense, I do not see how your inference can be denied."

Now, in these extracts, my esteemed correspondent has placed the main question just where I have placed it. I have contended, that if entire sanctification be an entire destruction of the root and principle of sin, then the cutting off the entail of sin is a necessary consequence; and I have maintained that entire sanctification, as taught both in the scriptures and by Mr. Wesley, *is* an entire destruction of the root and principle of sin. My correspondent doubts this; but he admits that if it be so, my conclusion, so far as he can see, is inevitable.

Having detailed, in the preceding parts of this chapter, the painful circumstances in which I was placed, and the menaces by which I was assailed, it may easily be imagined with what kind of feelings I went to the Conference. I might be cen-

sured; I might be degraded; I might be expelled. I knew not what to expect. All I knew was, that I intended to maintain a good conscience, and, if possible, to act the part both of a man and a Christian: and I hope, that by the grace of God, I was enabled to fulfil my intentions.

During the Conference, when my name was read in connection with the enquiry, "Are there any objections to any of the brethren?" my chairman arose and stated that there were no objections to my moral or religious character; and that to the question, "Does he believe and preach our doctrines?" I had distinctly answered, Yes. He then proceeded to observe, that he had, however, to bring before the Conference the subject of the book which I had published; and after narrating the circumstances of the case, so far as he was concerned, he gave the whole matter into the hands of the Conference. A conversation or discussion then ensued, notes of which I took. In this discussion some seven or eight ministers engaged, all, however, in one strain, and considerable severity was manifested. Amongst the various observations that were made, there were two especially which arrested my attention. One minister stated that the sentiments of Mr. Wesley could not be allowed to be called in question; and, to confirm this, another minister remarked, that "*to contradict Mr. Wesley is to contradict the scriptures!*" I hope that I have as much veneration for Mr. Wesley, as one uninspired man ought to have for another man equally uninspired; but to place Mr. Wesley on the same elevation with infallible apostles and prophets—and the statement in question does this, if it has any consistent sense—appears to me to be an unwarrantable sentiment. I had occasionally, for many years, heard statements of a somewhat similar character; but that a well-instructed theologian should declare, in the presence of nearly five hundred of his brethren, and without a single murmur of dissent, that to contradict Mr. Wesley is to contradict the scriptures, is to me one

of the most striking marvels of the nineteenth century. How can we wonder that Romanists should affirm the infallibility of the Pope, when there are Methodist ministers who can affirm the infallibility of Mr. Wesley? Even if we make a distinction, which the minister in question did not, viz., between the fundamental and the non-fundamental sentiments of Mr. Wesley, the question then arises, where is the line to be drawn? If we adopt that of the Poll Deed, some of the most important of Mr. Wesley's theological works will then be abandoned to the non-fundamental side of the line, while on the fundamental side of it, sentiments will be found which are allowed on all hands to be erroneous. What, then, is a man of ordinary understanding to make of the statement, that to contradict Mr. Wesley is to contradict the scriptures? And yet this is the principle on which my fate was to be determined. The question was not, what do the scriptures teach? but what does Mr. Wesley teach? and the rest was to be assumed. Besides, the only *arguments* of Mr. Wesley on the point for which I was arraigned, are on the non-fundamental side of the line, i,e., they are not recognized by the Poll Deed, and they are arguments which, I venture to believe, I had already demolished as completely, as Richard Watson had previously demolished the argument for the resurrection of brutes.

The result of the discussion above referred to was, that a committee was formed, consisting of ten of the principal ministers, who were to have a conversation with me, to deliberate on the subject, and to present a report to the Conference.

On the assembling of the committee, after the lapse of a few days, I attended in compliance with their request. One of the ex-presidents, who occupied the chair, opened the proceedings by asking me if I was the author of the book entitled Man Contemplated, &c., to which I answered, Yes. He then proceeded to make some remarks on the disrespect with which I had treated Mr. Wesley, and on the anti-Wesleyan character

of the sentiment, that holy parents would produce a holy offspring. In reply I stated, that nothing was farther from my intention than that of treating Mr. Wesley with disrespect; that I was not aware of having so treated him; and that I was quite prepared to retract any expression that could be deemed disrespectful. I then asked permission to give an account of the circumstances which had induced me to adopt the sentiment referred to, and also of the circumstances under which I had published the book. This was at once granted; and I proceeded to state the facts which I have already narrated in the first chapter of these pages. Some conversation then took place, during which one of the ministers read a passage from Mr. Wesley, in which he states that the hereditary transmission of sin will continue to the end of time; and then asked me if I admitted my views to be at variance with that statement; to which I of course answered in the affirmative. I was further asked whether I was willing to re-consider the subject, and I expressed my perfect willingness to do so, as there might be some considerations which I had overlooked, that might induce me to alter my opinion: and as tending to contribute to this object, permission was given me to communicate by letter with some of the ministers. Some other points, which it is not necessary to enumerate, were talked over, and then I withdrew.

On the following morning the report of the committee, including their recommendation, was read to the Conference. Some of the brethren objected to it as too favourable, and they contended for the infliction of some official displeasure. After a short discussion, however, the Conference adopted the report, and thus the proceedings terminated.

CHAPTER III.

RE-CONSIDERATION OF THE SENTIMENT, AND THE MATERIALS SUPPLIED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

On my return from the Conference, I hoped that, as the matter now stood, I should have a year of quiet, both from public controversy and public attack, that I might calmly devote my attention to a thorough re-consideration of the subject. This illusion, however, was soon dispelled. The Conference had not been closed more than about a fortnight, when a letter appeared in one of the Birmingham papers, written by a Wesleyan minister, and in which he publicly accused me of heresy; and as this was too congenial and too precious for the editors of the *Watchman* to let slip, they kindly copied it into their generous periodical. I did certainly think, that under the circumstances, such a proceeding, both on the part of the minister and that of the editors of the *Watchman*, was utterly uncalled for and wanton, and could answer no purpose but that of deliberately inflicting a wound. I took no notice of it at the time, and never should have done, if subsequent circumstances had not led to the composition of these pages; but I deem it proper to take notice of it now.

May I be permitted to ask, then, what my accuser means by "heresy?" Is there a definition in existence that will suit him? If there be, let him adduce it, that we may see the standard by which he judges others. But probably he has a definition of his own, and which, unfortunately, has never yet been reduced to a form of sound words. If this be the case, it is impossible for any one, except himself, to know who are and who are not heretics; and thus he has a monopoly in charges of

this sort. Bishop Hall somewhere states, that no man can be a heretic who embraces the three creeds, viz., the Apostles, the Nicene, and that of St. Athanasius. Now I heartily embrace every article of these creeds, and, therefore, according to the judgment of Bishop Hall, I am no heretic. But the judgment of Bishop Hall is probably of no value as compared with that of the Rev. Mr. H. Be it so; then we must sift the matter a little more closely. Heresy, according to my accuser, consists probably in rejecting any of Mr. Wesley's definitions of the doctrines of the gospel. If so, I am still no heretic, for I accept and believe them all, without an exception. As this view, however, will not serve my accuser's purpose, any more than the other, we must try a third time. A heretic, perhaps, is one who does not embrace all the sentiments of Mr. Wesley. If so, Mr. Watson, the conductors of the Wesleyan Magazine, and every Wesleyan minister, Mr. H. himself not excepted, are all guilty of heresy. But as we may be sure that my accuser has no definition of heresy that will include himself, we must try our hand again. Heresy, in the vocabulary of Mr. H., consists probably in the sentiment that Christ, in the economy of redemption, has made provision for the cutting off the entail of sin from the face of the earth. Now if this be heresy, I admit myself to be a heretic. But then, as this sentiment is the necessary consequence of Mr. Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification; and as the doctrine itself must be heresy, if the consequence be heresy, it follows that Mr. Wesley, as well as myself, is guilty of heresy. I can conceive of but one other definition of heresy by which I am likely to be included. I know a man who has declared that the longer he lives, the more willing he is to be led by the nose. Now if an unwillingness to be led by the nose constitutes heresy, I again admit myself to be a heretic. I am willing to render, and I maintain that every man ought to render, an enlightened and a Christian obedience to constituted authority, when that authority does not

interfere with the higher obedience that is due to God; but I am no more willing to be led by the nose than Wesley or Luther was; nor do I think that a willingness to be so led, is a quality that ought ever to characterize a human being who calls himself a MAN.

The charge of heresy is soon uttered; and usually it proceeds most readily from those who are least capable of sustaining it. It savours too much of popish dogmatism to be entitled to any respect, except from those who either cannot or dare not think for themselves. It is the common refuge of combined weakness and despotism; and from a Wesleyan minister, of all others, it comes with a bad grace. Mr. Wesley, it must not be forgotten, was denounced a heretic, and a dreadful heretic, and that a great number both of pious clergymen, and of devoted nonconformist ministers, concurred in this denunciation. One would have thought that a follower of Wesley, with a fact of this kind before him, would have had too much good sense to have iudulged in a flippant use of the word "heresy." If Mr. H., or the editors of the *Watchman* either, imagine that I am to be driven from a sentiment by the senseless cry of heresy, both he and they are very much mistaken. Let the sentiment be proved to be a heresy, and I will give it up at once; but this, I suspect, is a task to which both he and they are consciously inadequate, and, therefore, they must have recourse to a papal substitute.

Before I proceed to notice the correspondence into which I entered after the Conference, it will be proper to review the observations of two of those esteemed ministers to whom I submitted my manuscript. This, I think, is due, not only to the uniform courtesy with which those ministers have treated me, but more especially to their ability and high character as Christian gentlemen. The observations of the first are given on page 16, commencing with—"I rest on a general view of our fall and recovery," &c. These observations have always appeared to

me to involve the only argument of any real importance in opposition to my views. At the same time, and with all deference to my venerable correspondent, I am still unable to see their conclusiveness. In my work, I have already remarked, that whatever I derive from Adam, I must of necessity derive through the medium of my immediate parents; and, therefore, unless my immediate parents are themselves depraved, it seems impossible that I should derive depravity from Adam through them. And then, further, although I admit that every descendant of Adam must be born under the law of his relation to Adam, yet if I were to admit that this law necessarily involves the continued entail of depravity to the end of time, I should be shut up to the necessity of rejecting the doctrine of entire sanctification, as taught both by the scriptures and by Mr. Wesley. I beg to put the argument on this point in the following form:—

The law of relation to Adam involves the continued entail of depravity to the end of time:

But, the continued *entail* of depravity to the end of time, involves the continued *existence* of depravity to the end of time, since that which does not exist cannot be entailed:

Therefore, the law of relation to Adam is subversive of the doctrine of entire sanctification, as taught both in the scriptures and by Mr. Wesley.

Now, as I cannot renounce this fundamental doctrine of Christianity, sustained as it is by the clearest scripture evidence; and as I know of no scripture evidence to prove that the entail of depravity must continue to the end of time, I am compelled to conclude, that the law of relation to Adam does not necessarily involve the continued entail of depravity. And I am confirmed in this conclusion by the fact, that the entail of depravity has been superinduced, and formed no part of God's original design; and also by the fact, that for the destruction

of depravity, and consequently, for the destruction of its entail, the Son of God was manifested in the flesh.

I am exceedingly sorry to be under the necessity of differing from my venerable correspondent on this point, but I cannot embrace what appear to me to be antagonistic propositions.

The observations of my other correspondent are given on pages 17 and 18; they include a statement of three particulars, with an illustration of each. 1st. "I can understand how the maxim 'like produces like' may be predicated of matter, but I do not see how it can be predicated of mind." And yet it is predicated of mind by Dwight, Titman, Muller, Stier, Kurtz, Clarke, Watson, Fletcher, and Wesley, as I have shewn at p.p. 229, 230, and if it were necessary, I could add twenty or thirty more to the list. In the scriptures, also, its application to mind is distinctly taught; for example: "Adam begat a son in his own likeness;" and, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

2nd. "As I read the scriptures, especially St. Paul, I am born under a liability to punishment, and with a corrupt nature, not because my father and my mother were sinners, but because my representative Adam was a sinner." So far as this observation applies to the cutting off the entail of depravity, it accords with the observations of my other correspondent, on which I have already remarked. I would, however, beg further to submit, that any interpretation of the federal headship of Adam, which renders the entail of depravity necessary and unconditional, and thus legalizes sin, is manifestly an incorrect and unscriptural interpretation. The federal headship of Adam is of course to be maintained, just as the sovereignty of God is to be maintained, that is, consistently with other revealed truths; but I apprehend that we are not justified in sacrificing the glory of the redemptive economy at the shrine of the former, any more than rigid Calvinists are justified in sacrificing the glory of the Divine character at the shrine of the

latter. My respected correspondent will not deny that there is a sense in which every father is a federal head, without interfering at all with the superior federal headship of Adam.

3rd. "As you admit all children are born members of the mystical body of Christ, is not the entail of guilt and depravity more effectually cut off in him, than it could be in any, even the holiest parents?" This observation seems to ascribe to me a sentiment which I do not hold. I have maintained in my book, and I still maintain, that the cutting off the entail of depravity is exclusively the work of Christ. All that I have affirmed on this point, in regard to entirely sanctified parents, is, that depravity being exterminated from their moral nature by the grace of Christ, they cannot entail depravity on their children, i.e., that they cannot entail that which does not exist; or, in other words, to use the language of the London reviewer, that "the character of the offspring is conditional by the character, as well as by the constitution, of the parents." Now if this be true, the sentiment which I have advocated is of the highest practical use, inasmuch as it suggests to parents the vast importance of securing holiness, in order properly to condition the character of their offspring. Besides, who does not know that the immense difficulty in the training of children, and the awful frustrations of the designs of that training, are chiefly the consequence of the innate depravity of the children? The chief object of training, at present, is quite as much to suppress evil, as to develope good; and thus it is subjected to a fatal disadvantage. Let children be born free from depravity, and who does not see that the object of training will be greatly facilitated, and the designed results rendered immeasurably less problematical? The practical use, therefore, of my sentiment, possesses a value scarcely to be estimated.

In turning my attention to the re-consideration of the subject, I again read a considerable part of the works both of Wesley and of Fletcher, together with Payne "on Original

Sin," Harris "on the Patriarchy or the Family," Bushnell "on Nature and the Supernatnral," Bushnell "on Christian Nurture," and some others. In short, every production that was suggested to me, as likely to shed any light whatever on the subject, I procured and read. And then, in addition to this means, I also conversed or corresponded with several of my brethren in the ministry. All this I deemed necessary in fidelity to my statement before the committee; and then, as I found that it would be far more comfortable to myself to believe as the generality of my brethren believe, I was quite prepared to adopt any sentiment that would enable me consistently to set aside the conclusion at which I had arrived. The materials, therefore, with which I became furnished, I deem it right to lay before the public, that others may judge how far they were likely to produce an alteration in my views.

The first observation on which I had to reflect, was made to me by an aged minister at the Conference, but now gone to his reward, and one who in point of argumentative ability, was not second to any minister in that important assembly. "I agree with you to this extent, that if sin can be transmitted, holiness can be transmitted too; but I deny that either of them can be transmitted." This was to me, at the time, a surprising statement, especially as I had never before heard anything of the kind proceed from a Wesleyan minister. Now in considering this statement, two points arrested my attention; first, that the gentleman in question denies the Wesleyan doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity; and, secondly, that if the Wesleyan doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity be admitted, the doctrine of the transmission of holiness must likewise be admitted. Here, then, one of the ablest ministers in Methodism admitted the validity of my conclusion, allowing that the doctrine of the transmission of sin is true; and he set aside my conclusion, only by denying one of the fundamental doctrines of our church.

I proceed now to notice my correspondence with the Rev. J. W. Thomas. I have already stated the threatening of Mr. Thomas, viz., that if no one else would arraign me before the Conference, he would. As his intended service, however, was so abundantly supplied, I supposed that he would be content; but I was mistaken: his zeal against my heterodoxy was too warm to allow him to sit still; and hence, endeavouring "to give light to all that were in the house," he sought to induce the Conference to exercise a greater severity than they were disposed to sanction. In consequence of the very prominent part thus taken by Mr. Thomas, I supposed, of course, that he had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the subject in question, and that he was prepared to overturn my conclusion with the greatest ease. Had it not been for this supposition, I should never have thought of writing to Mr. Thomas on such a subject; but as I now supposed that he had obtained an amount of light which would speedily dissipate all my darkness, I very gladly took the opportunity, soon after Conference, of soliciting his kind assistance.

In my communication to Mr. Thomas, I simply stated the argument in the syllogistic form in which it presented itself to my own mind, and which I have given at page 11, requesting that he would do me the favour of pointing out wherein the argument failed.

In reply to this, I received the first letter from Mr. Thomas, and which, with some exceptions, he has correctly given in his pamphlet. This letter was to me quite unsatisfactory, and, therefore, I wrote to him again. As, however, it could not of course be expected that he would furnish his readers with my observations, I shall now include them in the following reply.

In reference to my syllogistic argument, Mr. Thomas cites a passage from Macaulay, to shew that a syllogism is not applicable to an experimental science of vast extent. Now, when a man begins in this style to object to a syllogistic argument, it

is sufficiently evident that he feels its force. A syllogism, it is true, is not applicable to an *experimental* science, and for the obvious reason that such a science, as every one knows, is to be determined by *experiment*, and not by logic. But what analogy is there between an experimental science, and the doctrines of theology? Theology, in fact, constitutes one of the chief domains of logic, and, hence, nearly all theologians have employed it more or less; and as to the syllogism especially, both Fletcher and Wesley frequently employed it in their various theological arguments. The truth is, that a theologian never quarrels with a syllogism, except when it involves a conclusion which he does not relish, but which he feels it difficult to overthrow.

Mr. Thomas remarks, that "tenacity in maintaining an opinion opposed to the general sentiment of Evangelical Christendom, is peculiarly out of place." On this remark I observe, that when Mr. Wesley first published his doctrine of entire sanctification, it was opposed to the general sentiment of Evangelical Christendom, and yet he maintained it nevertheless. I am, however, so far from being tenacious of my opinion, or rather my logical conclusion, that I have stated both in my book and elsewhere, that the moment it shall be proved to be erroneous, I will renounce it. The above remark, therefore, is uncalled for.

Mr. Thomas asks, p. 6, "What is moral depravity? What is sanctification? Do these admit of being defined with mathematical precision?" I reply, that as mathematical doctrines admit of being defined with mathematical precision, so theological doctrines admit of being defined with theological precision, and this is all that is required to enable us to reason about them with scriptural and logical security from either error or mistake. As to the doctrines of depravity and sanctification, Mr. Wesley, to whom Mr. Thomas has solemnly pledged himself to adhere, has defined both with all the precision that

theology requires; and he has reasoned about them too, with a logical acuteness that has seldom been exceeded. I accept his definitions as scripturally correct, although it appears that Mr. Thomas does not, and on these definitions I have based my unpalitable arguments. Even Mr. Thomas himself gives a definition of moral depravity, very different, it is true, and even subversive of that of Mr. Wesley, and then he reasons from his own definition. Now, if Mr. Thomas claims the privilege of reasoning from his own definition, on what principle am I to be prohibited from reasoning from Mr. Wesley's definitions? Is reasoning from a definition legitimate, when Mr. Thomas is allowed to define? and is it illegitimate, when Mr. Wesley defines?

"It is admitted," says Mr. Thomas, "that the mental peculiarities of our race are capable of hereditary transmission, as well as the physical ones of colour, features," &c. Very true, but is it not also admitted, that *moral qualities* are capable of hereditary transmission? And how is it that Mr. Thomas has left these out of the enumeration? Pride, envy, self-will, and enmity to God, are all moral qualities; and Mr. Thomas knows as well as I do, that every evangelical church in Christendom maintains that they are capable of hereditary transmission. But, then, to have stated this truth would have damaged the whole of his argument, and, therefore, to serve his purposes, it was best to suppress it.

After occupying two pages in preliminary trifling—and on which it would have been unnecessary to remark, had it not been for its obvious design—Mr. Thomas observes;—"It appears to me that the first fallacy in your argument lies in making depravity '*a positive operating principle*,' '*a positive infection* of man's moral nature, an *operating principle* of evil pervading his entire moral constitution.'" True, I have thus defined moral depravity, and so has Mr. Wesley, and so has the Methodist Church, and so has every other Evangelical Church in

Christendom. My first fallacy, then, according to Mr. Thomas, lies in adopting the definition which Mr. Wesley and the Methodist Church have given of human depravity! This, certainly, is an admirable specimen of consistency in a Wesleyan Minister, and one, too, who seeks to punish a brother for a supposed departure from the Wesleyan standard! Mr. Thomas, it will be observed, has renounced the Wesleyan views of human depravity, and adopted those of Dr. Payne. Now, according to these views, as Mr. Thomas maintains, human depravity does not consist in any positive principle of moral evil, but only in a *defect*, the *absence* of positive holiness, the *want* of the moral image of God; and in support of these views, he copies Dr. Payne, in citing the scripture words *unholy*, *ungodly*, *disobedient*, *lawless*, *iniquity*, and *unrighteousness*, all which, he contends, are negative terms, and, consequently, do not signify any thing that is positively evil: so that although a man may be ungodly, and disobedient, and lawless, and iniquitous, and unrighteous, there is nothing positively bad within him after all! These views, of course, are quite orthodox, and their accordance with the following statements of Dr. Payne no one will doubt;—"Sin is, correctly speaking, a predicable of man, not of his nature. There may be a *degenerate*—perhaps, we may add, a *depraved* nature; but not *a sinful nature*. The phrase, *a sinful man*, is easily understood, and perfectly correct; but *a sinful nature* is an anomaly in thought, and a solecism in language." p. 154. "I do not believe that anything that is, correctly speaking, *connate* (born) with us is morally evil." p. 194. "The tendency to sin has not a moral character." p. 303. Now according to these statements, depravity, being merely the absence of good, is not sin;—man, although he commits sin, has not a sinful nature;—no child is born in a state of moral evil;—and although there may be a tendency to sin, that tendency has no moral character. Such are the views of Dr. Payne, and of his devout scholar, Mr. Thomas, and the first

fallacy in my argument lies in not having adopted them myself!

There is, however, another aspect of this anti-Wesleyan view of depravity, that requires to be looked at. According to Mr. Thomas, a child is born without any positive principle of moral evil, and he is also born without any positive principle of moral good. He is born, therefore, without any positive principle either of moral evil or moral good. There is an entire negation of both. Now, how far such a state as this varies from the notion of the *tabula rasa*, advocated by the Unitarians, I leave others to judge. How marvellous then it is, that I should be told by a Wesleyan Minister, that the first fallacy in my argument lies in not adopting such a sentiment!

"But the fatal objection to your theory," says Mr. Thomas, "is that the facts are against it." p. 10. The first class of facts adduced against me consists of some passages of scripture. But no one, I apprehend, can read them, without being convinced that Mr. Thomas was sadly at a loss for argument. They prove, indeed, that that which is born of the flesh is flesh; but as to whether an entirely sanctified parentage will or will not produce a holy offspring, they are as silent as death. In order to have given a fact against me,—and I would admit even one as decisive of the whole question,—he ought to have adduced an instance from scripture, in which entirely holy parents have produced a depraved offspring. But this he has not done, and for the obvious reason, that there is not such a fact to be found, nor a single passage in which such a truth is taught. His remarks about not trusting in parentage, are all right in themselves, only they leave the point in question untouched.

The second class of facts is derived from experience, and here there is even greater imbecility than in the preceding. Mr. Thomas has never met with a fact that will sustain me. Very likely he has not; and a writer in the *London Review* has never met with a fact that sustains the doctrine of entire sanctifica-

tion, and he suspects that the doctrine has never been realized; so that facts, it appears, are just as much against the holiness of parents, as they are against the holiness of children. Mr. Thomas either knows, or he ought to know, that the designs of redemption are not to be determined by the fact of their realization. Christ died to make the church spotless and holy, but does it follow, that because the church is not spotless and holy, the doctrine, therefore, is not true? Redemption designs to terminate the very facts to which Mr. Thomas refers, and thousands of other existing facts both in the world and in the church, and to create a new class of facts, worthy of human nature, and worthy of God. To appeal to existing facts, therefore, is an argument against the declared purposes of redemption, is a piece of inconsistency as deplorable as it is mischievous.

I have now noticed all the principal points in Mr. Thomas's first letter. I gave him a syllogistic argument, and requested that he would shew me how I was consistently to dispose of it. But has he done this? Even admitting that the Wesleyan view of original sin is a fallacy, as he says it is, and that human depravity is nothing more than the simple absence of positive good; still, not a single member of my argument is affected. The negative view of depravity, indeed, so far from militating against the syllogism, converts it, in fact, into an obvious truism. Take, first, the major proposition—*that which does not exist cannot be entailed.* And what has Mr. Thomas said against this? Not a word. I presume, then, that he admits its truth, and especially so as Dr. Payne remarks, "Is it not a general law, that no being can transmit properties which it does not possess." p. 146. Take, secondly, the minor proposition—"*But moral depravity does not exist in entirely sanctified parents.*" And what has Mr. Thomas said against this? Not a single syllable throughout the whole letter. Since, then, both the major and the minor propositions are absolutely left untouched, the conclusion is inevitable, viz., "*That entirely sanc-*

tified parents cannot entail moral depravity on their offspring." This follows, indeed, on Mr. Thomas's principle, even supposing that the parents are not sanctified at all, and is expressly stated by Dr. Payne. "That which is propagated," says he, "must have actual entity; it must be a thing, and not the lack of a thing;" and as depravity, according to the theology of Dr. Payne and Mr. Thomas, is not a thing, but the lack of a thing, it were absurd, says Dr. Payne, to say that it can be propagated. p. 157. It is evident, then, according to these views, that even unsanctified parents cannot entail moral depravity on their offspring, simply because depravity is not a thing, but the lack of a thing, and has, moreover, as Dr. Payne says, no moral character. If my views, therefore, are un-Wesleyan, what are those of Mr. Thomas?

Having sent the substance of the preceding remarks to Mr. Thomas, in reply to his first letter, it is evident from the first page of his second letter, how keenly he felt their force, and to what an awkward dilemma, as a Wesleyan minister, he found himself reduced. Conscious that my conclusion and Mr. Wesley's definitions are inseparably linked together; and conscious, therefore, that he must either accept my conclusion, or renounce Mr. Wesley's definitions, he fairly gives them up, and allows them to shift for themselves as best they may. This is certainly a marvellous mode of proceeding, and one which I could not have expected from a man who only a few months ago wished to induce the Conference to punish me for a supposed departure from Wesleyan doctrine.

But there is another matter, of a still more serious character, so far as a Wesleyan minister is concerned, which I have now to notice. In my letter to Mr. Thomas, I cited the following statements from Mr. Wesley concerning moral depravity. "Every man born into the world now, bears the image of the devil, in pride and self-will; the image of the beast, in sensual appetites and desires." "We are all born with a sinful, devilish

nature." "We putrefied in Adam as the root. The root was poisoned, and so the branches were envenomed." "Adam corrupted man's nature, and leavened the whole lump of mankind." I stated also, that Mr. Wesley, in defining human depravity, uses the words *unclean, defiled, bias, alienation, aversion, contagion, infection,* and *taint.* Now Mr. Thomas, if I understand him, does not believe a syllable of these statements, and he tells me that my believing them constitutes the first fallacy in my argument; and yet, to the question proposed every year in the district meeting, "Do you believe and preach our doctrines?" Mr. Thomas answers, Yes. This, to an uninitiated and candid mind, may seem startling; but Mr. Thomas has discovered a method by which he can reconcile such an answer with his own conscience, viz., to understand the above statements and expressions in a FIGURATIVE sense. Such is one of the expedients by which Mr. Thomas proposes "to give light to all that are in the house." He states, indeed, in vindication of it, that the scripture expression, "This is my body," is to be understood figuratively. Very true; and the Unitarians, by employing a figurative interpretation, subvert the essential divinity of the Son of God; and let it once be admitted that Mr. Wesley's definitions of Christian doctrines may be understood figuratively, and any Unitarian will subscribe to them as honestly as Mr. Thomas does. This is a serious question to the interests of Methodism, and one on which something more may be said; but I leave it for the present to those whom it more immediately concerns.

As the second letter of Mr. Thomas makes no attempt to grapple with my syllogistic argument, but while admitting it to be insoluble, raises a variety of objections to the conclusion, to every one of which I had already replied in my book, I did not deem it necessary to offer any further reply. On the closing part of that letter, however, I shall now make some remarks.

At page 18, he states, that if my "doctrine of hereditary

holiness were the unavoidable result of Mr. Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification, it would follow that that doctrine must be re-considered." That my conclusion is the unavoidable result of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification, is admitted by several of my correspondents; and both Mr. Thomas and every one else who has attempted, has utterly failed to prove that it is not. The very manner in which Mr. Thomas writes on the subject sufficiently shews, that he is himself conscious that the doctrine in question involves my conclusion. He may re-consider the doctrine, and throw it overboard, as he has already thrown overboard the Wesleyan doctrine of original sin; and he may pronounce the former a fallacy, as he has pronounced the latter a fallacy; but such a proceeding will only shew that Mr. Thomas' tendencies are backward, and that the old Calvinian notion of inexterminable depravity has more charms for him than moral purity. I have already re-considered the doctrine oftener than once, and the discovery of its involved consequence has rendered it, in my judgment, increasingly glorious. Viewed in this light, as one of my correspondents remarks, it presents a grand consummation of the Christian scheme; whereas the dogma of the perpetuated transmission of moral filth to the end of time, is a foul blot on Christianity, and a reflection on the infinite Redeemer.

Mr. Thomas supposes that my theory weakens the hands of those who defend the doctrine of entire sanctification; and in illustration of this he asks, how it is possible, on my views, to answer those who assert that in the very holiest there still remains a principle of depravity, real though latent, an ineradicable taint of sin? Mr. Thomas himself can have no difficulty whatever in answering this question, because he denies that there is any *real principle* of depravity, or *taint* of sin in any person, sanctified or unsanctified; and, therefore, my theory cannot weaken his hands at any rate. Leaving this, however, I am prepared to maintain that Mr. Thomas' observation is

just the reverse of the truth. With what kind of consistency can any man assert the doctrine of entire sanctification, and at the same time assert that parents, thus sanctified, will entail depravity on their offspring? "What!" says the opponent, "can parents entail that which does not exist? If depravity is entailed on the offspring," continues the opponent, "certainly depravity exists in the parents, and, therefore, your doctrine of entire sanctification is untrue." Now this is the real dead lock to an advocate of entire sanctification, and from which nothing, I apprehend, but my theory, as it is called, can deliver him. My theory, therefore, so far from militating against the doctrine of entire sanctification, is the only principle on which it can consistently be maintained.

Another point on which I would remark, is involved in the statement, "that all children are born more or less depraved." Mr. Thomas then admits that all children are not born *equally* depraved. Some are *more* depraved, and some are *less* depraved. Now what is it that makes the difference? Mr. Thomas does not tell us. The *London Review*, however, on this point, kindly supplies his lack of service. "The character of children," says that Review, "is conditioned by the character, as well as by the constitution of the parents." It seems clear, then, from the admission of these two learned writers, that the amount of depravity in the offspring, is dependant on the amount of depravity in the parents; and, consequently, the more pure the parents, the more pure the offspring. Now this is really an admission of the very truth which I advocate, and against which these writers profess to contend. Error, it appears, on this subject, as well as on others, cannot be consistent.

The following is a copy of my third letter to Mr. Thomas:—

"My dear Sir,—My object in writing to you, is not to dispute, but to obtain that information by which I may be enabled to arrive at correct conclusions on the point before referred to. Your views of depravity I shall seriously consider:

there are, however, some other questions of importance that require to be looked at. You admit, I presume, that Adam, as he came out of the hands of his Maker, was holy; and that if, prior to his fall, he had had children, those children would, like himself, have been holy. You admit, then, I presume, the doctrine of the hereditary transmission of holy moral principles, in the case of unfallen Adam.

"Now, redemption, as I understand it, is designed to restore man to a state of holiness, equal at least to that which Adam possessed prior to his fall. Such, too, is the doctrine of Mr. Wesley, as is evident from the following citations:—'By sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God.' 'It is a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity,' a recovery of the divine nature.' 'There is a new and clean heart; and the struggle between the old and the new man is over.'

"If, then, the entirely sanctified Christian is morally as pure as Adam was, on what known principle can it be consistently maintained that he will not transmit his pure nature to his offspring, just as holy Adam would have transmitted his pure nature to his offspring? And denying, as you do, that holy Christians can prodncee a holy offspring, will you be kind enough to state by what argument it can be proved that holy Adam would have produced a holy offspring.

"To me, the above are questions of great importance, and any light that you can throw upon them will be gratefully acknowledged. I am, &c.,

N. Rouse."

In reply to this communication I received Mr. Thomas' third letter, and to which I sent in substance the following answer:

"My dear Sir,—I thank you for your long and interesting letter. It appears to me, however, that you have not satisfactorily answered either of my inquiries. With regard to the

impossibility of holiness being transmitted by the entirely sanctified Christian, you have made some common-place remarks, and to which I have already given a full reply in my book. But with regard to the transmission of holiness by unfallen Adam, you offer no evidence whatever. You adduce, it is true, the phrase 'very good,' and the passage 'God created man in his own image,' &c., to shew that Adam possessed a holy nature; and then you affirm 'that man, thus created, *must* have been capable of transmitting that nature unimpaired to his descendants.' But this is no proof; it is a mere assertion. That Adam's nature was holy, is not the point in question. The question is,—How do you prove that Adam would have transmitted his holy nature to his posterity? To say that he *must*, is to assume the very point that requires to be established, and which I specially requested you to establish. On what principle *must* he have been capable of transmitting his holy nature to his posterity, except on the principle that like produces like in holiness as well as in sin? Admit this, and the proof is obvious; but deny this, and I do not believe there is a man in Christendom who can prove that holy Adam would have produced a holy offspring.

Will you permit me to say, that there appears to be some confusion in your employment of the expressions 'natural,' 'contrary to nature,' and 'supernatural.' Adam's holiness, you say, was *natural*—then, 'we are cut off the olive tree which is wild by *nature*, and grafted *contrary to nature*'—then again, 'the virtues which constitute the Christian character are *supernatural*.' Now it is clear that in these statements you use the terms *natural* and *nature* in two directly opposite senses, the former of a holy state, and the latter of a sinful state. Such a use of terms, in the same connection, and in relation to the same subject, almost invariably involves confusion; and not unfrequently, although undesigned, it involves sophistry. The term *natural* is applied in the scriptures to man's fallen condition,

but never to his primeval condition; consistently with the scripture use of the term, therefore, as applied to man's moral state, the term *supernatural* ought to be used in reference to his primeval holiness, as well as with reference to his Christian holiness. I have no objection, however, to call man's original condition *natural;* but then, to be consistent, and to avoid confusion, his fallen condition must be called *unnatural.* Either of these courses, however, would spoil your play upon the terms, and thus demolish even the appearance of argument.

With regard to Adam's primeval holiness, I presume you will not deny that it was the production of the Holy Spirit, and that its continuance was dependant on the Holy Spirit; and, if so, then primeval holiness was precisely of the same nature as Christian holiness, and proceeding from and dependant upon the same source. All this, indeed, is not only admitted, but contended for both by Dr. Payne and Dr. Harris, both of whom maintain that the holiness of Adam was *supernatural.* Your statement, therefore, that the holiness of Adam, as distinguished from the holiness of a Christian, was *natural,* is manifestly incorrect. If, however, you still persist in calling primeval holiness *natural,* then redemption is clearly designed to restore man from his sinful or *unnatural,* to his *natural* condition. And thus the Christian, restored by redeeming grace to his *natural* condition, *must* propagate a holy offspring, just as Adam, in his *natural* condition, *must* have done so.

That the Christian is physically and mentally inferior to unfallen Adam, admits of no question. I suppose, however, you will not deny, that in the entirely sanctified Christian, the root of sin is destroyed, and that morally he is restored, as Mr. Wesley says, 'to his primeval health, to his original purity.' If, then, you admit that Adam was capable of transmitting to his offspring the holy nature which he possessed, on what principle do you deny that the entirely holy Christian is capable of transmitting to his offspring the holy nature which *he* pos-

sesses? If you say that, the holy Christian will transmit simply his nature without any moral quality; then, how will you prove that Adam would have done any more than transmit simply his nature without any moral quality? These are questions which enter into the very essence of what you call my theory, and I hope that you will fairly grapple with them.

After a variety of remarks on the impossibility of a Christian attaining to Adamic perfection, you observe, that 'this, by the bye, disposes of another strange doctrine of yours;' and then you cite the passage in which I observe, that for a man who has obtained forgiveness, and who is daily walking in the commandments of the Lord blameless, to be daily confessing his trespasses, and supplicating for pardon, would be as absurd as for a man who is restored to perfect health, to be daily taking medicine for the removal of disease. Now, permit me to say, once for all, that I do not, and never have contended that the sanctified Christian is restored to what is called Adamic perfection; and you know this, although it answers your purpose to write as though it were otherwise. All your remarks, therefore, on this subject, are lost labour. That the sanctified Christian has many failings, and commits many mistakes, in consequence of ignorance and physical weakness, I have always admitted; but are these *sins?* You will, of course, say that they are sins according to the Adamic law,—very well, but are we under the Adamic law? If you say that we are, will you then have the kindness to state what that law is, and where it is to be found, as I have never yet seen it. If, however, you admit that we are not under the Adamic law, then, clearly, our violation of it is no more a sin, than our violation of some unknown law given to the inhabitants of Jupiter, is a sin. To ask forgiveness, therefore, for our violation of a law under which we are not placed, and to which we are not amenable, is, I repeat, manifestly absurd. We might just as reasonably ask forgiveness because we have not the knowledge of an angel, or because

we cannot fly like an eagle. Surely a Christian has work enough to attend to the law under which he is placed, and to seek forgiveness for his violations of that, without having also to repent of his violations of a law under which he is not placed. The Christian law, I presume, and the Christian law only, as revealed in the scriptures, is that under which we are placed. Now, that the pardoned and purified Christian can, by the grace of God, walk in the commandments of this law blameless, is the doctrine both of the scriptures and of Methodism, for even our hymns teach us to sing—

'When thou the work of faith hast wrought,
I shall be pure within,
Nor sin in deed, or word, or thought;'

And then again—

'Restored to our *unsinning* state.'

Such a Christian, then, availing himself of his Christian privilege, clearly commits no sin, and, therefore, clearly, he has no sin to be forgiven. If you deny this conclusion, you must maintain either that the sanctified Christian cannot, even by the grace of God, keep himself morally pure; or, that he is under obligation to ask forgiveness for the violation of a law under which he is not placed, and to which he is not amenable. I leave you to adopt which alternative you think proper.

I am, &c. N. ROUSE."

A considerable part of Mr. Thomas' third letter has no connection with the subject in dispute; of this, therefore, I took no notice, nor do I think it necessary to take any notice of it now.

In consequence of the above communication to Mr. Thomas, I received his fourth letter; but I appeal to every candid reader, whether it contains anything like an answer to my arguments and inquiries. So thoroughly feeble on the points in question did the letter appear to me, and so evidently had its

author exhausted his strength, that I deemed it unnecessary to make any reply. There are, however, two or three points on which it may not be improper now to remark. In the first paragraph he states that by the word *must*, he did not intend "absolute necessity, but simply, that we may *reasonably suppose* Adam to have been constituted by his Maker capable of transmitting, unimpaired to his descendants, that nature which he had received." So that *must*, in Mr. Thomas' vocabulary, signifies, that *we may reasonably suppose*. But on what principle may we even reasonably suppose that holy Adam would have produced a holy offspring, except on the principle that like produces its like in holiness, as well as in sin? Shut out this, and there is no ground even reasonably to suppose that Adam would have transmitted his holy nature to his descendants. Mr. Thomas is surprised that my candour did not give his argument credit for the whole of Gen. i. 26—28. I can assure him that I did give his argument credit for the whole, but what then? he might as well have cited a whole page from Dante, so far as the point in question is concerned. The passage proves that Adam was created holy, but on the question of the transmission of nature, every one must see that it is absolutely silent. "If this, then," says Mr. Thomas, "does not prove the point to your satisfaction, I do not know what would." What a pitiable predicament is this for a professed theologian! In his injudicious zeal to overthrow my theory, he has placed himself in a position in which he is compelled to acknowledge, that he cannot prove that holy Adam would have produced a holy offspring! His attempt to eke out the matter by referring to the analogy of animals, is clearly of no service, except on the principle that like produces like.

In his second paragraph, he makes a laborious essay to vindicate his use of the word *nature* in two opposite senses, and tells us that Cruden gives eight meanings to the word. Very likely Cruden does, and if he had given eighty meanings to

the word, it would not have affected the question. It is still a truth, that to use the same word, with two different meanings in the same argument, frequently involves both confusion and sophistry. Dr. Campbell, and many other theologians, have censured David Hume for using the word *experience* in different senses; and yet David Hume might have vindicated himself precisely as Mr. Thomas has done.

In the third paragraph, Mr. Thomas observes that Mr. Wesley's statement that in sanctification "the root of sin is destroyed," is only a *metaphor* on which no argument can be built. Now here Mr. Thomas manifests a disposition to treat Mr. Wesley's definitions of sanctification, as he has treated his definitions of original sin, i.e. figuratively, and thus to get rid of them altogether. Mr. Thomas maintains that there is no root of sin in any man, however wicked, and, consequently, that there is none to destroy. I beg to say, however, that I accept of Mr. Wesley's definitions both of original sin and entire sanctification, and not those of Mr. Thomas.

In his fourth paragraph, Mr. Thomas returns to the subject of the daily confession of sin. In reply, I remark, that whatever is sin in the eye of the scriptures, requires both repentance and forgiveness; but then, I hold, that whatever is sin in the eye of the scriptures, the sanctified Christian can, by the grace of God, avoid, and walk in the commandments of the Lord blameless. Mr. Thomas' appeal to the etiquette of civil communities, on such a subject, is preposterous. I want scripture authority on the revealed questions of sin, repentance, and forgiveness, and not the frivolities of varying human etiquette.

In the fifth paragraph there is the following statement,—"In your book there is, of course, much with which I cordially agree. There is also much that I could praise, if space and leisure permitted; and this would be a very agreeable task." I beg most cordially to acknowledge this compliment, as the sincere tribute of its author; and I only regret that the fact of

my carrying the designs of redemption to the destruction of all sin, both indwelling and hereditary, should have induced Mr. Thomas to have adopted the course that he has.

At page 36, Mr. Thomas observes, "The doctrine that all children are born depraved, you call a Christ dishonouring theory." I reply, that this statement is incorrect. The doctrine that all children *are* born depraved, I have never denied. It is not this, therefore, but the doctrine that all children *must* be born depraved to the end of time, and in spite of redeeming influence, that I call a Christ dishonouring theory, and I still maintain that it is; it is dishonouring to Christ, because it teaches that he either cannot, or will not, terminate the prevalence of sin.

In the same connection Mr. Thomas further states, that the new birth, as understood by Mr. Wesley, I have designated a partial and mongrel regeneration. This, too, I beg to say, is a complete mistake. The doctrine of the new birth, as understood by Mr. Wesley, I both embrace and defend. The term *regeneration*, as employed by me in the passage cited, does not refer to the new birth, but to the future moral restoration of the world in its collective capacity; and it is the notion, that this future moral restoration will be characterized by a universal and ceaseless influx of depravity, that I designate a partial and mongrel regeneration. In both the above instances, therefore, Mr. Thomas has committed an egregious mistake; and it is in this way that I have been misrepresented time after time, not only by Mr. Thomas, but also by others.

In my work I have said that if the entail of depravity is to be continued to the end of time, the declarations of Holy Scripture, relative to the latter day glory, can never be fulfilled. On this point Mr. Thomas remarks,—"*Perhaps* you take those declarations in too strict and absolute a sense." I reply, and *perhaps* I do not. Universal terms I understand in a universal sense, when there is nothing in the connection or in the nature

of the subject to qualify them; and as I know of nothing to qualify the universal terms relative to the latter day glory, I of course understand them in a universal sense. Nor am I alone in this; the 696th of our hymns distinctly announces the same truth.

"Then the *whole earth* again shall rest,
And see its paradise restored;
Then *every soul*, in Jesus blest,
Shall bear the image of its Lord,
In *finished holiness* renewed,
Immeasurably fill'd with God."

Now this state of things, I maintain, can never be accomplished, if the entail of depravity is to continue to the end of time. Mr. Thomas admits this, and hence his only way of escape is to make the millennium a partial one. Thus in every step throughout this discussion, Mr. Thomas is an advocate for the continued existence of sin. It would seem as though sin must have some peculiar charms for Mr. Thomas, or as though there were some special advantages connected with it, that he should so strenuously plead for its continued existence. Nay, he will even give up two of the fundamental doctrines of Methodism, rather than not advocate the continued existence of sin to the end of time. How far this is consistent in a Christian minister, whose very profession it is to seek the universal destruction of sin, I leave others to judge.

About two thirds of Mr. Thomas' last letter are occupied with points altogether foreign to the question in dispute. With regard to these points I have only to say, that a defence of them in these pages would be out of place; and that if a defence of them should become necessary elsewhere, I shall not hesitate to defend them at the proper time.

The next correspondent whose communications I have to notice, is acknowledged on all hands to be a very superior man;

and I wrote to him under the impression, that if any minister in Methodism could consistently refute my syllogistic argument, *he* could. It is not necessary to give the whole of the correspondence that passed between us, a few of the chief points will be quite sufficient. In answer to my solicitation for his kind assistance in dealing with the conclusion at which I had arrived, I received the following communication:—

"My dear Sir,—That which is born of the flesh is flesh. The sanctified man remains flesh; he cannot have more innocence than that of the young child, though he may become as a little child, with the superaddition of the developed character of a perfect Christian. This developed character may prevent the self-will, inherent in the nature of man from the cradle to the grave, from coming forth into self-exertion, from being for one moment indulged, from even taking the form of distinct desire, but it does not annihilate the tendency. 'Slay the dire root and seed of sin,' is poetry, not strictly weighed theology. Nor can we be at liberty to press the doctrine of Christian perfection as to contradict the Bible and the common experience of all Christians. You would annihilate man's nature—as man, now born apart from God; I regard holiness as supernatural. We have not sufficiently recognized the germ of truth as to the flesh—and its power through life—which there is at the bottom of Calvinism."

This communication, I must say, very much surprised me; and coming from the source from whence it did, I began to fear, not for my argument, but for what has hitherto been regarded as one of the chief glories of Methodism. I presume that no intelligent person can read the above observations, without perceiving that they strike directly at the doctrine of entire sanctification as taught by Mr. Wesley, and which doctrine, as Wesleyans, we profess to hold. Upon reflection, too, it began to appear to me, that the front of my offence did not consist in a departure from Mr. Wesley,—for some of my principal oppo-

nents have departed from him more than I have,—but in contending for a more complete destruction of sin than he did, for he allowed the entail of sin to be perpetuated; and that if I had *lowered*, or even *denied*, the doctrine of sanctification as taught by him, and allowed a greater latitude to sin than he did, I should never have heard a syllable against my book. These were the impressions produced, both by the above and by other communications; and if I am wrong in these impressions, I ask pardon.

Let me now call attention to some of the statements in the above letter. "The sanctified man remains flesh." Now, as the word *flesh*, in Wesleyan theology, signifies depraved human nature, the sentiment of my correspondent is, if I understand him, that in the sanctified man, human depravity remains. What my correspondent means by the word *innocence*, I cannot tell, unless he means moral purity. The next statement, then, amounts to this, viz., that the sanctified man cannot have more moral purity than that of the young child; and as Wesleyan theology maintains that every child born of the flesh is depraved, it follows, that the sanctified man can never cease to be depraved in this world, because he cannot have more purity than that of the young child. Self-will, says my correspondent, is inherent in the nature of man from the cradle to the grave. Now that self-will is essential hostility to God, is allowed on all hands. Mr. Wesley maintains, that in entire sanctification self-will is destroyed; but here I am taught that self-will is interminable from the cradle to the grave. Another statement, if I understand it, is, that the line "Slay the dire root and seed of sin," found in one of our hymns, is not correct theology. I at once admit, that on the principles of my correspondent, it is not correct theology, for he contends that the root and seed of sin cannot be slain. Mr. Thomas, as I have already noticed, advances a similar statement. Now, according to the principles of these gentlemen, considerable

portions of our hymns are incorrect theology, and especially those which relate to full redemption; and, therefore, it becomes a question, whether these gentlemen ought not, as honest men, to propose a revision of our hymns, so as to expunge from them Mr. Wesley's doctrines both of original sin and entire sanctification.

The next statement is to me exceedingly marvellous. "Nor can we be at liberty to press the doctrine of Christian perfection as to contradict the Bible and the common experience of all Christians." Now if this statement is to be interpreted in accordance with the preceding statements, it seems clear that in the opinion of my correspondent, Mr. Wesley's views of Christian perfection contradict the Bible; and that I do not misrepresent him, is evident from the fact that he makes the common experience of all Christians one of the standards of Christian perfection; for that Mr. Wesley's views of Christian perfection contradict the common experience of Christians, is universally admitted. There is, however, another view of this statement that requires to be noticed. The common experience of all Christians, it appears, is to be the standard by which the privileges of the Christian economy, as revealed in the New Testament, are to be interpreted. I have always been simple enough to believe that religious experience ought to be elevated to the scripture requirements, and not scripture requirements sunk down to the dwarfish level of the common experience of Christians; here, however, so far as I can understand, I am taught another lesson, and taught it too by an eminent Wesleyan minister.

In the next statement I am charged with seeking to annihilate man's nature—as man, now born apart from God. I reply, that by man's nature, I understand that nature as it came out of the hands of the Creator. That man is now sinful, I of course admit; but sin is something that has been superinduced, and, therefore, does not constitute an essential element in man's

nature. It is an element which the scriptures expressly teach that redemption is intended to destroy; so that if I seek to annihilate man's nature, I have the satisfaction of knowing that redemption contemplates the very same thing. But the truth is, that all that I would annihilate is sin, and thus deliver man's nature from its superinduced moral corruptions, and restore it, as Mr. Wesley says, to its original health, to its primeval purity. To the latter part of the statement also I demur. Man is born under the covenant of grace, and the subject of divine influence, and, therefore, not apart from God. If this were not the case, infants either could not be taken to heaven, or they would be taken there in a condition apart from God.

The last statement is in perfect keeping with all the preceding ones, and is worthy of special attention. "We have not sufficiently recognized the germ of truth as to the flesh—and its power through life—which there is at the bottom of Calvinism." This observation sufficiently shews that my correspondent has gone back again, or, at least, that he is on his way, to the old antinomian dogma of necessary indwelling sin, and against which Wesley and Fletcher directed their tremendous artillery, both of scripture and of logic. On such an observation, especially as proceeding from the quarter from which it does, I might expatiate at considerable length, but it is unnecessary.

In answer to some remarks on the above communication, I received a long letter, and from which I give the first two paragraphs. "If you plant the seed of the sweetest and finest flavoured apple, the fruit of the tree which springs from this seed will be a sour crab—the original variety of crab from which this apple has been developed—a mere crab. If you plant the seed of the most flowery and beautiful potatoe, the root of the plant which springs from that seed will be acrid and uneatable. How far does this illustrate the major in your syllogism."

"If the life of the apple tree, at its full and cultured development, is, so to speak, reproduced, multiplied, and perpetuated by grafting, then the same sort of apple at the same stage of culture and development, will be the fruit of the graft; so if the potatoe be itself planted, or a cutting of it, not its seed, there is a similar reproduction—its own life is carried on—and may be developed to yet higher perfection by still higher culture. Such is the distinction between production or reproduction by propagation, and by division. Now you seem in your theory to imagine, that as it were by division from the parent, his life, or a part of it, is reproduced in the infant, at the same stage of development; whereas the case is one of propagation."

To this, and to the rest of the letter, which accords with this key note, I returned in substance the following answer:—

My dear Sir,—I am exceedingly obliged by your very copious communication—too copious, I fear, for your convenience, and I do not wish to impose any task upon you beyond what is perfectly convenient. I shall give your observations all the attention which the acknowledged ability of their author can demand from me. I strongly suspect, however, that your simile of the apple and the potatoe involves the doctrine, either that human nature as it came originally from the hand of God, possessed an inherent tendency to degeneracy, or, that it was already morally bad, but designed to be made good by some subsequent process; in other words, that man originally was a mere crab tree, but that he was designed to be converted into an apple tree by subsequent culture. If this is not the moral of the simile, I neither understand it, nor perceive its relevancy. Now, on the doctrine involved in the simile, I at once admit, that in sanctification the crab element remains; for I have never contended that sanctification raises a man to a higher state of purity than that in which he was created; nor have I contended that children can ever be born in a higher state of purity. If human nature was a crab tree in the beginning, I

am quite free to admit that it will be essentially a crab tree to the end of time, and perhaps through all eternity; but that man in the beginning was either a crab tree, or had the sour elements of the crab in his nature, is utterly at variance with the account of his creation.

I should, perhaps, hesitate to affirm, that your views of entire sanctification are contradictory to those of Mr. Wesley; but you will permit me to say, that I cannot reconcile them. Mr. Wesley, if I understand language at all, maintains that in entire sanctification the very elements of moral depravity are extirpated; whereas, I understand you to teach most expressly, that these elements remain. I have always admitted, that if entire sanctification does *not* involve the entire extirpation of moral depravity, the conclusion of my syllogism is not sustained. But may I ask, are you prepared to admit, that if entire sanctification *does* involve the entire extirpation of moral depravity, my conclusion is sustained? If you are, the nature of entire sanctification is the only real question in dispute; but if you are not, then I am unable to see that your remarks on sanctification can have any relevancy whatever to the question. If you can overthrow my conclusion, consistently with Mr. Wesley's views of entire sanctification, why do you set aside those views, and contend for the doctrine of the continued existence of the flesh—and its power through life—which lies at the bottom of Calvinism?

Relative to the privative theory of depravity, which you advocate, I may just remark, that although some Calvinistic divines—and even Richard Watson, though very doubtfully—have adopted it; yet Wesley, Fletcher, Benson, Clarke, and a multitude of others, maintain that moral depravity is a positive evil; and I hope that I am not censurable for adhering to the Wesleyan view on this subject. A few Calvinistic divines have recently adopted the privative theory, evidently for the purpose of getting rid of the obnoxious consequences of their

creed; inasmuch as it enables them, to some extent, to vindicate the justice of God in the utter abandonment of the sinner, even from his very birth. Dr. Wardlaw, however, Calvinist as he is, has shewn that this theory is attended with insuperable objections.

I have for some years perceived, what appears to me to be an inevitable consequence of the doctrine of entire sanctification,—a consequence, too, which in my judgment reflects the highest glory on the redeeming work of Christ. I am told that this consequence, viz., the termination of the entail of moral depravity by the power of divine grace, is a dangerous error. If such be the case, I hope that I am quite willing to be convinced of it, and I have written to you because from your known ability—and which no one rejoices more to acknowledge than I do—I expected to be furnished with some considerations which would fairly induce me to alter my views. As yet, however, I do not see how the consequence is to be avoided, if the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification is admitted; nor have I met with a single observation from any quarter that even suggests how. The only method of escape that I can see—and this has been suggested to me by several ministers, and by yourself too—is, that the doctrine of Mr. Wesley, as to the entire extirpation of moral depravity, must be abandoned. Now this expedient, I admit, furnishes an effectual method of escape to those who can adopt it; but then it is of no service to me. I believe that Mr. Wesley's doctrine of the entire extirpation of moral depravity is as scripturally true, as that Christ died for man; and, therefore, it is impossible that I can abandon it. Besides, Mr. Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification is one of the fundamental doctrines of our body; and, therefore, I have a Wesleyan right to assume it, and to reason from it; and no Wesleyan can consistently object to my doing so. If the admitted premises do not sustain my conclusion, let it be shewn that they do not, and I will

at once give up the conclusion; but to ask me to give up the fundamental premises, in order to avoid the conclusion, is a piece of advice which I cannot understand, and which I am not disposed to follow.

I am, yours, &c. N. R.

In reply to this, I received a short letter, from which I give the following extracts:—

"I have very little faith in syllogisms applied to such a region as that of spiritual capabilities and experience."

"Your hypothesis implies that children are born at the same stage of spiritual attainment as their parents."

"I am not sure that a being cannot transmit what at the time it does not possess. I do not understand what transmission is, or what propagation is, especially when the spiritual nature, or the will and character is in question. A man may not possess a limb, and yet may transmit it. I would rather believe in creationism, if it must be so, than in your hypothesis. It has fewer difficulties. How do I know but that the law is such that natures in succession are laid up in the parent even from his own birth (potentially) which must, if he have children, come forth in a certain order, and that the law is thus antecedently determined. No absolute conclusion can be drawn by logic on such a territory of unknown powers as this. Again, what a man has not actually, he may have potentially, and transmit it."

To the above statements I returned in substance the following answer:—

My dear Sir,—Although you have not much faith in syllogisms, Mr. Wesley had a great deal, as few theologians have employed them more frequently than he; and I should doubt the correctness of any doctrine that will not bear the application of the severest logic. Let visionaries and fanatics trample on argument, but never let it be said that the followers of the logical Wesley have become afraid of the syllo-

gism. Logic can never enter the territory of the unknown; it deals only with acknowledged truths, and derives conclusions from them. This is its legitimate domain, and to this domain I have confined it.

My hypothesis, as I understand it, does *not* imply that children are born at the same stage of spiritual attainment as their parents. The moral nature of parents is one thing, and the developments of that nature are another thing. My hypothesis implies, or rather teaches, that children are born with the same *moral nature* as their parents; and this, I presume, will not be denied. Children born of depraved parents, are born with a depraved nature, although they are not born with all the developments of their parents' depravity; and I suppose you will admit, that if our first parents, prior to the fall, had had children, those children would have been born with the holy nature of their parents, although not with the developments of that holy nature. If, then, holy Adam would have transmitted his holy moral nature to his offspring, how is it that a holy Christian cannot transmit his holy moral nature to *his* offspring? If you say that the holiness of the Christian is not created holiness, I reply, neither is the depravity of the sinner created depravity, and yet you admit the fact of its transmission. If, therefore, you allow of the transmission of a moral nature changed from holiness to sin, on what principle can you object to the transmission of a moral nature changed from sin to holiness?

You are not sure, it seems, that a being may not transmit what it does not possess, for a man may not possess a limb, and yet he may transmit it. This, of course, you intend to be regarded merely as a witticism; otherwise it might be contended that a man with two legs can transmit half a dozen to his offspring; that holy Adam could have transmitted a depraved nature; and that a depraved man can transmit a holy nature. The present question is not a question of the *modus operandi* of

transmission and propagation, and, therefore, our ignorance on that point does not affect a logical conclusion. It is a question of acknowledged facts and laws, and it is on these only that I base my reasoning. The law that like produces like, both in the vegetable and in the animal world, is admitted on all hands; and that it obtains in the moral world too, is admitted by all who allow that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that holy Adam would have produced a holy offspring.

I have no objections to the distinction which you make between what a man may not have actually, and what he may have potentially. Adam, for instance, in his unfallen state, had not a sinful nature, but he had the power to become sinful. If he had had children prior to his fall, he would not have transmitted a sinful nature, but a holy one; but with that holy nature he would have transmitted the power to become sinful. And on the same principle, if a Christian becomes holy, I freely admit, that although he cannot transmit a depraved nature, any more than holy Adam could, because he has it not, yet he will transmit the power to become depraved, because he has that power, and it forms an essential part of his moral nature.

I am, yours, &c. N. R.

In sending this letter to my correspondent, I anticipated that my course of reasoning, based as it is on the Wesleyan doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity, would place him in an awkward predicament, and that he would be compelled either to admit my conclusions, or to throw overboard the Wesleyan doctrine of original sin. Accordingly, on the reception of his final communication, I found that he had adopted the latter alternative, as the following extract will shew:—"I certainly do not believe in the transmission of any (properly so called) moral quality by generation. To me, it seems pure jargon to talk of the propagation of depravity. In this undoubtedly lies your fallacy, though it may be hard for you to perceive it." This is precisely the sentiment of Mr.

Thomas. Both these gentlemen have expressly renounced the Wesleyan doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity, which it seems is pure jargon, and have embraced that of Dr. Payne, which is scarcely a single remove from Socinianism; and they tell me that the fallacy of my argument lies in not adopting the same opinion! What will Mr. H., of Birmingham, and the *orthodox Watchman*, who have accused me of heresy, say of this? It remains to be seen.

In a former letter, (see page 72,) my correspondent observes, "I would rather believe in Creationism, than in your hypothesis; it has fewer difficulties." Very likely he would; and Mr. Toplady would rather believe that God made some men in order to damn them, than in Mr. Wesley's hypothesis of general redemption, because it has fewer difficulties. And Unitarians would rather believe that Christ is a mere sinful man, than in the hypothesis of his essential divinity, because it has fewer difficulties. But what is it that my correspondent would rather believe, than in my hypothesis? In Creationism; that is, if I understand him, he would rather believe that God creates every individual child with a sinful nature, than in the hypothesis that Christ died to destroy the entail of sin. No doubt he would; nor should I be surprised if he would not rather reject Christianity altogether, than embrace a Christianity which provides for the annihilation of moral depravity. The entail of moral evil, although it is the curse of the world, is too precious to be parted with. It is an old friend that must not be forsaken, notwithstanding its blasphemies against heaven. It is Pandora's box, containing all human abominations and miseries; the heirloom of the primeval enemies of God; and, therefore, it must be preserved at all cost, and even the second Adam himself must not be permitted to touch it.

Having now noticed the materials furnished to me by the three gentlemen whose sentiments I have considered, I beg to

ask any reasonable and consistent man, whether such materials were ever likely to induce me to alter my views? The conclusion at which I have arrived in "Man Contemplated," &c. is founded on two of the fundamental doctrines of Methodism, viz., that of the hereditary transmission of depravity, and that of entire sanctification. The three gentlemen in question, however, instead of showing that my conclusion does not follow from these premises, admit in fact that it does; and hence, in order to avoid the conclusion, they deny the two fundamental doctrines on which it is founded. To me, therefore, their arguments are of no service whatever, except to confirm me in the validity of my conclusion. I maintain the two doctrines in question, and when it becomes necessary I am prepared to defend them; and, therefore, if my conclusion is to be overturned at all, it must be overturned consistently with the maintenance of these doctrines—a task which, I suspect, will never be performed.

I must now turn to material of another kind than that which has been already noticed. During the time that my correspondence was going on with Mr. Thomas, I accidentally met with a Wesleyan minister of considerable standing and observation, and with whom I had no previous acquaintance, except by name. He introduced the subject of my book, and frankly stated that he did not see how my arguments on the cessation of the transmission of moral depravity could be refuted by any one who admits the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification. He stated also, that he had conversed with a few of the ministers on the subject, but that, generally, they manifested a reluctance to grapple with the question.

About the same time I received a communication from another minister, and from which I give the following extract:—"I thank you for your book. I have read it with great pleasure, and am about to re-commence it, in order more fully to study the doctrinal question which you have started. At pre-

sent I cannot go with you; only I must say one thing, that the doctrine, so far from wearing a dangerous and terrible aspect to me, rather clothes redemption with new beauty and strength. My danger would be, lest its attractiveness should lead me to ponder too slightly the evidence for and against it."

After the reception of his letter I wrote to him, stating my argument in the syllogistic form already given, and requesting that if he could discover any flaw in it, he would have the kindness freely to point it out. In his reply, which I received in a few weeks, he expressed some hesitation on certain points connected with moral depravity and entire sanctification; but with regard to my argument, as based on the acknowledged doctrines of Methodism, he observes,—"The conclusion is certainly legitimately drawn from the premises." Speaking also of the theory of seminal existence, he remarks,—"Even if we all *did* exist seminally in Adam, and if our depraved nature *was* the *natural* consequence of his fall, I do not see why the offspring of a parent entirely sanctified, should not, for the same reason, (i.e. as a natural consequence,) participate in the parent's renovation. But if it can be proved that our souls are immediately originated by our parents, then it seems to me that you *must* be in the right."

In another communication that I received from one of our aged ministers, and unsolicited on my part, the following observation occurs:—"The sanctification of human nature is a phrase I have often heard from our brethren when preaching on holiness. I have for years past told some of them, that if they were right, the transmission of human depravity must be stopped in sanctified parents. Like produces its like. How in that case can depraved children be begotten by sanctified parents?"

I need not say that the expression of judgment by the three gentlemen now referred to, has tended very considerably to strengthen my confidence in the correctness of the conclusion at

which I had arrived; and more especially as I have met with no attempts to subvert that conclusion, except those which are founded upon a denial of either one or two of the fundamental doctrines of Methodism.

In the course of my re-consideration of the subject, the following prayer in the 354th of our hymns, arrested my attention:—

> "Let me gain my calling's hope;
> O make the sinner clean!
> Dry corruption's fountain up,
> *Cut off* the *entail* of sin."

It is true, that in 1777 Mr. Wesley denied that the entail of sin could be cut off; but two years afterwards, when he compiled the hymn book, he inserted the hymn containing this verse, composed by his brother Charles; and speaking of this as well as of the other hymns, he observes,—"Here are no cant expressions; *no words without meaning.* Those who impute this to us, know not what they say. We talk *common sense,* both in prose and *verse,* and use no word but in a *fixed* and *determinate sense.*" The expressions, then, "*Dry corruption's fountain up, cut off the entail of sin,*" are not words without meaning; they are used in a fixed and determinate sense; common sense in verse, says Mr. Wesley, and which, therefore, every man of common sense can understand. I do not see, then, how I can avoid the conclusion, that Mr. Wesley here teaches his congregations to pray for all that I have contended. In a conversation with one of our ministers on this point, he observed, "Yes, the entail is cut off in the individuals." Very good; but if the entail is cut off in the individual parents, then it ceases to exist, and to talk about the transmission or continuance of an entail that has ceased to exist, is simply absurd.

I have already remarked, that in addition to my correspondence, I have also read everything bearing upon the subject

that I could procure. But while I have met with nothing at all calculated to alter my views, I have met with something calculated to strengthen them. Two of the productions of Dr. Horace Bushnell have fallen into my hands, viz., his work on "Nature and the Supernatural," and his work on "Christian Nurture." Speaking of the first of these works, the *London Review* for October, 1859, remarks, "When we look into the book, we do not wonder at its speedy and wide-spread popularity. Independent of the known ability and eloquence of its author, the book is itself one of the most splendid contributions to theological science in our own or any age." And speaking of a certain chapter in the book, the *Review* further remarks,—"If Dr. Bushnell had never written anything beyond this chapter of about fifty pages, he must in virtue of it alone take his place among the foremost writers in theology the world has seen."

In referring to Dr. Bushnell, then, I have clearly the sanction of the *London Review* in saying, that I refer to one of the most able and distinguished Christian theologians of his own or of any former age. Now in his "Natural and the Supernatural," p. 123, cheap edition, we have the following observations,—"Furthermore, as corruption or depravity is propagated under well-known laws of physiology, what are we to think but that a *regenerate life* may also be *propagated*, and so the scripture truth of a *sanctification from the womb*, may some time cease to be a thing remarkable, and become a commonly expected fact. And then, if a point should finally be reached, under the sublime palingenesia of redemption, when Christian faith, together with its fruits of nurture and *sanctified propagation*, should become nearly, if not quite, universal, and the world, which is now in its infancy, should roll on millions of ages after, training its immense populations for the skies, how magnificently preponderant the advantages of the plan of propagation, which at first we thought could be only a plan to set us out in the wrong, and sacrifice our virtue by anticipation."

The accordance of these observations with the sentiments to which I have given expression in "Man Contemplated," &c., is too obvious to require a single remark; the following, however, from his work on "Christian Nurture," are still more explicit and decisive. After citing a passage from Bp. Hopkins, who propounds the same doctrine, although with some indistinctness, the Doctor observes,—"Enough, that he (the Bishop) asserts an organic connexion of character between parents and children, as effectual for good as for evil; nay, that they may as truly, and in the same sense, *transmit holiness* as they *transmit existence*." He then adduces the following confirmatory remarks from Bishop Hopkins,—"By an established constitution, parents convey moral depravity to their children, And if God has been pleased to make a constitution and appoint a way in his covenant of grace with man, by which pious parents may *convey and communicate moral rectitude or holiness to their children*, they, by using the appointed means, do it as *really* and *effectually* as they *communicate existence* to them. In this sense, therefore, they may *give holiness and salvation to their children*." After exposing the licentious but common notion, that children must grow up in depravity, in order to be personally converted; the Doctor asserts his conviction, that God has ordained a law for the propagation of a holy seed, and then remarks,—"Let not any one be repelled from this truth, or set against it, by the prejudice that piety is and must be a matter of individual choice. The same is true of sin. Many of us have no difficulty in saying that mankind are born sinners. They may just as truly and properly be *born saints*—it requires the self-active power to be just as far developed to commit sin, as it does to choose obedience. Nor let any one be diverted from the truth I am going to assert, by imagining that a propagated piety is, of course, a piety without regeneration—for aught that appears, regeneration may, in some initial and profoundly real sense, be the twin element of propagation itself.

The parentage may, in other words, be so thoroughly wrought in by the Spirit of God, as to *communicate the seeds or incipiencies of a godly*, just as it communicates the seeds of a depraved and disordered character." p. 121, 126, 127.

Such are the sentiments of Doctor Bushnell, and in these sentiments he has the concurrence of Bishop Hopkins; and Doctor Witherspoon, too, he states, held sentiments in a high degree coincident.

Doctor Bushnell, it must be observed, does not carry his views of sanctification to the extent to which Mr. Wesley does; and, consequently, he is deprived of the main argument which I have employed; but he contends, nevertheless, for the scriptural character of what is called my theory, with a strength of argument to which, I believe, no reply has been, or can be given. The concurrence of so distinguished a theologian as Dr. Bushnell, with the views to which I have given publicity, to say nothing of that of Bishop Hopkins, is a circumstance which, I need scarcely say, has tended not a little to cause my re-consideration of the subject to terminate in an increased conviction, that my views are not only Methodistically logical, but also scripturally correct. I beg, therefore, most respectfully to reassert the seven arguments on the subject contained in "Man Contemplated," &c., together with the eight replies to objections. I am still prepared, however, to receive any new light that can be thrown on these points, and shall welcome its rays from whatever quarter they may proceed.

After the close of the correspondence and inquiries now noticed, I was still unwilling to resign all hope of discovering some method by which my conclusion could be consistently set aside; and, therefore, I applied to the learned Editor of the Wesleyan Magazine, and addressed to him the following letter:

Rev. and dear Sir,—You will recollect that when I was before the committee appointed to sit on my case last Conference, I stated that the argument on the subject of the termination of

the entail of moral depravity had, from the beginning, presented itself to my own mind in the following form :—

That which does not exist cannot be transmitted:

But, in entirely sanctified parents, moral depravity does not exist:

Therefore, by such parents, moral depravity cannot be transmitted.

Permit me to say, that I am still unable to see the inconclusiveness of this argument. Since Conference I have read several works bearing directly or indirectly on the subject, but I have not met with anything by which I am enabled to avoid the conclusion which has forced itself upon my judgment. I am not aware that I have any pet notions; the truth as it is in Jesus, is, I trust, my only and supreme aim,—and the moment that the sentiment in question is fairly proved to be erroneous, I hope I am prepared to reject it. If, therefore, you will have the kindness to shew that the preceding syllogism is clearly inconclusive, you will do me great service, and I shall, without any hesitancy, publicly announce my recantation of an erroneous sentiment. I am, &c. N. Rouse.

Of this letter I received a polite acknowledgment, and promising a reply in the course of a few days; but I heard nothing more for nearly three months, when I received a *printed* sheet, containing the notice of Mr. Thomas' pamphlet, which appeared in the Magazine for March.

In reply to this communication I sent the following letter to the Editor :—

Rev. and dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the "Notice" which you have sent me, together with the kind letter which accompanied it. There is nothing in the Notice that gives me the least uneasiness, so far as I am personally concerned. You will, however, permit me to express my astonishment that such a "Notice" is intended for the Magazine. Mr. Thomas has renounced the Wesleyan doctrine of human depravity, and advo-

cated that of Dr. Payne, which in my judgment is scarcely a remove from the *tabula rasa* of the Unitarians; and that the Methodist Magazine should accept of this as the basis of a reply to my argument, and even recommend it to the Methodist public, is to me one of the most ominous circumstances in connection with Methodism that I have met with.

There is also another view of the case which I cannot but look at. I was not aware that any Wesleyan minister could bring his mind publicly to attack a brother whom he knew to be bound. Mr. Thomas has done this. I would ask, is such a proceeding honourable or gentlemanly? And is it honourable for the Methodist Magazine to sanction such an attack under such circumstances? Give me the ordinary liberty of an English and a Wesleyan Christian, and I object to no attack of any kind; but to put me in fetters, and then to attack me, is a course of proceeding which I am unable to reconcile with any known principle either of justice or of honour.

Had your sentiments as contained in the "Notice," been private, as I expected when I wrote to you, I should have felt an interest in calling your attention to some of the statements; but as they are intended for the public, you will hardly expect that I should do so.

I am, yours, with sincere respect, N. Rouse.

At the ensuing Conference, the polite Editor sought to vindicate his dishonourable conduct in this affair, by stating, that although I was bound to be silent, he was not; and this vindication was accepted by the platform, if not by the whole Conference, as satisfactory!

The "Notice" itself I shall now take the liberty to review. After exhorting the readers of the Magazine to make haste to ponder a pamphlet which denies the Wesleyan doctrine of original sin, the Editor remarks,—"In compliance with an almost imperative request, we add a sentence or two." This, to me, is a surprising statement. Can it be that the members of the

Book Room Committee, some of whom advised me to publish my work, have almost imperatively requested the Editor to violate the common rules of honourable conduct, by publicly attacking a brother minister, whom they knew to be pledged to silence? Or, is it possible that the President of Conference can have stooped to authorize such a proceeding? Or, further, am I to conclude that there is some other authority in Methodism, unconstituted and secret, and to which the Editor is bound to submit, even to the performance of a dishonourable action? From which of the above sources the almost imperative request proceeded, I know not. All that I can say is, that when I gave my pledge, I thought that I had to deal with honourable gentlemen, otherwise I should never have given it.

The Editor goes on to remark,—"He who affirms hereditary holiness, is bound to shew cause for his opinion." I reply, with all deference, that I have shewn abundaut cause for my opinion, and cause which, so far as I have seen, remains in all its strength.

The Editor remarks further,—"What we want is some word of scripture, expounded in the light of fact." I reply, that when Mr. Wesley first embraced the doctrine of entire sanctifition, he had no fact to sustain it; and one of our own ministers, in an article in the *London Review*, doubts whether there has ever been a fact to sustain it. Mr. Wesley derived the doctrine from the unfettered study of the scriptures, and its reception amongst Christians was to create its own facts. As to some word of scripture in support of my opinion, I beg to state that I have already given several in my section on the subject. If, however, the Editor wants some word of scripture which expressly states that the design of redemption is to terminate the entail of depravity, I will give him one, when he has given me one which expressly states that the entail of depravity is designed to continue to the end of time.

The Editor remarks still further,—"We have no faith in any

new development." It is clear, then, that the Editor has no faith in the doctrine of entire sanctification as taught by Mr. Wesley, since this doctrine is most undeniably a new development. For sixteen hundred years this doctrine had no existence in the Christian church. It was contained in the scriptures of course, from the time of the Apostles, but it was undeveloped until the time of Mr. Wesley; and hence he states that he derived it from the scriptures alone, and that he built it on no authority, ancient or modern, but the scriptures. On its first publication, therefore, by Mr. Wesley, it was called a new doctrine, or, if the Editor pleases, a new development, and Mr. Wesley was denounced a heretic for preaching it. Even to this day it is universally regarded as peculiar to Methodism, and no other church has ever yet embraced it. If, therefore, a new development of scripture truth took place in the eighteenth century, on what known principle may not another new development of scripture truth take place in the nineteenth century? Theologians who tread in the old beaten rut of mere church dogmas, will of course raise a clamour against it, just as they did against the former; for there has scarcely been a single instance of the development of truth, either scientific or biblical, which has not had to encounter the hostility of a host of theologians.

The Editor having made the remarks on which I have now animadverted, proceeds to speak directly to the question; and here we are favoured with observations arranged under four heads. Under the first head, we are told that "the scripture hath concluded all under sin." I reply, that all men, viewed apart from the realization of the saving benefits of redemption, are under sin, admits of no question; this is the fact which the scriptures teach: but redemption was designed to reverse this fact, and to bring all men under the dominion of grace and purity;—and hence the scriptures never teach that an entirely sanctified believer is under sin, and that is the point in ques-

tion, nor do they ever teach that men are to be under sin to the end of time; so far from this, they teach just the contrary.

"The relation of the entire race to fallen Adam,—is *independant of all intermediate descent.*" This, I beg to say, is a sheer impossibility. Relation is dependant on existence; but my existence, as a descendant of Adam, is dependant on my immediate parents: and, therefore, whatever relation I sustain to Adam, I must of necessity derive it through my immediate parents. To say, therefore, that John Williams, who was born yesterday, sustains a relation to Adam, independant of the ancestral line between Adam and himself, is, in my judgment, a greater absurdity than even transubstantiation itself. That the scriptures *apparently* teach it, I admit, just as they *apparently* teach transubstantiation and the Ptolomean system of astronomy; but they all alike belong to the category of the impossible and the absurd. Even if refuge be sought under what is sometimes called a penal relation, still that penal relation is dependent on intermediate descent. Besides, a penal relation, apart from a natural relation, involves no moral depravity, for if it did, then God himself would be the direct author of sin.

The second head contains a number of objections precisely of the same kind as those which were urged by the antagonists of Wesley and Fletcher against the doctrine of entire sanctification, and they are just as conclusive against that doctrine, as they are against the doctrine which I have maintained. It is enough to say, that the provisions of the gospel are equally as necessary to *preserve* holiness, as they are to originate and promote it.

Under the third head, the Editor speaks of "a maze of confusion,"—a confusion, however, which arises entirely from his own short-sightedness. "What," says he, "if only one of the parents be holy? What, if one or both fall away?" I reply by proposing similar questions. What, if one parent have a sound and vigorous constitution, and the other be three parts

gone in deep consumption? What, if Adam and Eve had fallen after the birth of their first holy child? And when the Editor has answered these questions, he will have substantially answered his own.

The fourth head commences with the statement, that "the facts are all against this theory." I reply, that there is not a single fact in existence against it. After some further statements, the Editor proceeds,—"The maxim, that like produces like, is true of nature and capacity; but it is not true in any sense inclusive of personal character, quality, or attainments." In answer to this, I remark, that mere *attainments* are not inherited, is allowed on all hands; and for the obvious reason, that they are dependent almost entirely on circumstances, and from no part of man's nature, either intellectual or moral: but that *character*, so far as it can be predicated of man's nature, is inherited, I have the expressed admission of my Wesleyan critic in the *London Review*; for he allows that "the character of the offspring is conditioned by the character, as well as by the constitution of his parents." That like produces like in *nature* and *capacity*, is admitted by the Editor himself; but the nature of man is a *moral* nature, and consequently possesses moral *qualities*, however undeveloped; and, therefore, like produces like in a moral nature with moral qualities. This, indeed, is not only granted, but maintained by all who hold the Wesleyan doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity; and three of my ministerial correspondents, in order to avoid the obvious consequence, have been obliged to renounce the doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity, and to adopt the *tabula rasa* of the Socinians. If, then, like produces like in a moral nature with moral qualities,—and the Editor must either admit this, or renounce the Wesleyan doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity,—on what principle can it be maintained, that like will not produce like in a holy moral nature, as well as in a corrupt moral nature? Let the Editor address

himself to this point, and he has a task worthy of his highest powers.

As to the two questions with which the "Notice" closes, and which the Editor calls pertinent, I beg to say, that they are anything but pertinent. Take, for instance, the last,—"What Christian parent has not observed the signs of depravity in his children?" I answer, in all probability, none. But the question, to be pertinent, should be this, viz., What Christian parents, *both of whom are entirely sanctified*, have not observed signs of depravity in their children? and I reply to it by saying, that when the Editor will find me two such parents, who have nevertheless given birth to a depraved child, I will instantly renounce my views on this subject.

In closing my observations on this "Notice," I cannot but express my surprise that the Editor should have given publicity to such a feeble and jejune production. That he felt himself unequal to the task which he was almost imperatively requested to perform, is evident, not only from the character of the production, but also from the fact of his silence to me for three months, although he had promised to answer me in a few days. It is clear, that had it not been for an almost imperative request, he would never have touched the subject at all. Most of the sentiments have been threadbare for centuries, and some of them are subversive of two of the fundamental doctrines even of Methodism itself.

Having now replied to the various arguments and statements that have been urged against the conclusion at which I had previously arrived, viz., that Christ, in the economy of redemption, has made provision for the cutting off the entail of moral depravity, and having thus far occupied chiefly a defensive position, it may not be improper for one moment to turn the tables, and to make an attack on what I believe to be a serious, if not a fundamental error, viewed from both a scriptural and a Wes-

leyan stand-point. I remark, then, that I feel myself obliged to reject the common notion of the necessary entail of sin to the end of time,—

1st.—*Because it is subversive of the scriptural and Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.* That which is entailed must exist, in order to be entailed; this is the dictate of common sense: and to say that a thing can be entailed which does not exist, is a manifest absurdity. If, then, all children must be born depraved to the end of time, it follows, that all parents must be depraved to the end of time; and thus, the doctrine of entire sanctification is at once completely overthrown. I reject this notion,—

2nd.—*Because it annihilates the sinfulness of sin, by making sin to be necessary.* Moral depravity is essential hostility to the moral law of God; if, therefore, the entail of moral depravity to the end of time is necessary, it follows, that the existence of hostility to the moral law of God to the end of time is necessary; but this annihilates the sinfulness of hostility to God, or, in other words, it annihilates the sinfulness of sin, for if sin is necessary, it is no longer sin. I reject this notion,—

3rd.—*Because it is derogatory to the honour of Christ as a Saviour.* If the entail of moral depravity is to be continued to the end of time, it must arise from one of the two following causes,—either Christ *cannot* cut it off, or, he *will not* cut it off. If he *cannot*, then moral depravity possesses a power which he is unable to destroy; and, consequently, he ceases at once to be a perfect Saviour from sin. If he *will not*, then he deliberately designs the continuance of moral depravity; and this involves consequences even more dishonourable than the preceding. I reject this notion,—

4th.—*Because it makes a holy God to be the direct author of sin.* If the entail of depravity to the end of time is necessary, it must arise from the fact that God has so constituted human nature that it cannot be otherwise. But if God has so consti-

tuted human nature as to make the entail of moral depravity necessary and inevitable, then he is the author of moral depravity, just as he is the author of human nature; or, in other words, he is the direct author of sin.

Now as I cannot but shrink from all these (to me) revolting consequences, I feel compelled, as a consistent Wesleyan Christian, to reject the sentiment which involves them. That good and eminent men hold the sentiment in question, I shall be the last to deny; and good and eminent men too have held the opinion, that God has decreed from all eternity that a certain number of the descendants of Adam shall be damned. But did either Fletcher or Wesley spare such an opinion, because it was maintained by good and eminent men? The duty of a Christian theologian, I apprehend, is to expose pernicious opinions, by whomsoever they may be patronized.

CHAPTER IV.

SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS, AND CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

On the assembling of the ministers of the District at Leek, and after the usual preliminaries, the question was proposed with regard to each minister, "Does he believe and preach our doctrines?" To this question, when my name was called, I answered, Yes. One of the members of the meeting immediately interposed, and asked, in a tone not very courteous, "What does Mr. Rouse mean by such a positive answer?" To this I made no reply; but handed to the chairman the document which, in accordance with the directions of Conference, I had prepared. From this document I copy the following declaration of my theological views:—

1. With regard to the Godhead, and the persons who constitute the Trinity in Unity, I subscribe to the three creeds of the established church, viz., the Apostles', the Nicene, and that of Athanasius, excepting, however, the damnatory clause.

2. I believe that the sacred scriptures are a revelation from God to man, and that they are the only infallible standard of faith and practice.

3. I believe that man was created morally pure, or, in the image of God.

4. I believe that human depravity—the result of the fall of Adam—consists in a principle of alienation from, and enmity to, God; and that this depravity, viewed apart from the counteracting influences of redemption, is total and universal.

5. I believe that Christ, by his sacrificial sufferings and death, made a true and proper atonement for all human sin;

and that in consequence of that atonement, provision is made in the moral government of God for the salvation of every human being.

6. I believe that Christ, as the great High Priest, and the divinely appointed Mediator, makes intercession with the Father for the whole world; and that every blessing which man enjoys is the fruit of this intercession.

7. I believe that the office of the Divine Spirit is to apply the benefits of Christ's death and intercession to the consciences and hearts of men; and that all moral and spiritual good in man, is communicated and sustained by that Spirit.

8. I believe that faith, or, a reliance on the merits of Christ, is the essential instrumental means of salvation in all its stages; and that this reliance will continue to be necessary in every individual case, infants excepted, to the end of time.

9. I believe that justification is the righteous forgiveness of sin, in consideration of the infinite satisfaction which Christ has made to the demands of the moral government of God.

10. I believe that regeneration is the renewal of the soul by the Holy Spirit; and that this renewal is essential to both adults and infants, as a qualification for heaven.

11. I believe that entire sanctification, "while it excludes neither ignorance, infirmities, nor temptations, is an entire deliverance from the power and root of sin, an extermination of all evil thoughts, evil tempers, pride, and self-will; that the struggle between the old and new man is over, and that the soul is restored to its primitive health, its original purity." *(Wesley.)* I believe, consequently, that the entirely sanctified believer is morally, though not physically and mentally, as perfect as Adam was before the fall.

In all the above doctrines, and others which I have not deemed it necessary to enumerate, I subscribe to the sentiments of the venerable Wesley.

12. And further,—I believe that Christ, in the economy of

redemption, has made provision for the cutting off the entail of moral depravity, and that this is the *logical* and *inevitable* consequence of the doctrine of entire sanctification. I do not, however, hold, nor have I ever stated, that this entail either *has been*, or *is now* cut off in any individual child; all that I believe on this point is, that Christ, in the plenitude of his restoring grace, has made provision for this purpose, and that, therefore, it is the duty of the Christian church to seek its accomplishment. In this sense I understand the following lines of Mr. C. Wesley, as given in the 354th of our hymns:—

"Let me gain my calling's hope;
O make the sinner clean!
Dry corruption's fountain up,
Cut off the entail of sin."

While, however, I hold this sentiment, and cannot but hold it, with my present views of theological consistency, I deem it right to state, that as I knew that the sentiment was not held by my brethren, I have never either introduced it into the pulpit, or sought to make it a subject of discussion in private circles. I published it,—not, however, without the advice of several of the ministers,—because I believed it to be an important truth connected with the designs of redemption, and calculated to promote the interests of Christian holiness; but the idea of making it a topic of address, either in the pulpit or out of it, has never entered my mind; and, under existing circumstances, never would have entered my mind, even if the Conference had not taken up the question at all.

Reference was made last Conference to the Baptismal service, as though the sentiment advocated in my book would prevent me from using it. I beg to say, that I have advanced no sentiment which, in my judgment, is in the slightest degree opposed to that service. The Baptismal service I have always used, and still use it, as freely and as heartily as any minister in our Connexion.

The document from which I have cited the above, contains observations on several other points, but as those observations, in substance, are all given in different parts of these pages, it is unnecessary to repeat them here.

After the reading of the above-noticed document, a conversation ensued, the tone and direction of which were given by the chairman. There was to be no discussion.—It was to be assumed that I was in error.—The meeting must do their duty.—The eyes of the Conference were upon them.—Affection must not be allowed to interfere with fidelity to Methodism.—He had been censured for not dealing with the case at the last District Meeting.—And both he and the meeting must now atone for past neglect.

Such were the sentiments enunciated by the Chairman. During the conversation, Mr. Thomas rose four or five times, to give his authority to the adoption of decisive measures; and all this, unseemly as it appeared, both to myself and others, yet—as it was on the right side of the question—was freely accepted, as tending to help forward the good cause. The result was, that a committee was nominated, consisting of six ministers, and whom I was to meet on the following morning. One of the members of this committee was also appointed to converse with me in the mean time, in order to convince me of my error. During the day, I had a private interview with this gentleman, and he kindly submitted to my perusal an essay which he had written on the subject, and which he thought would set me right. After tea, at my lodgings, I read the essay; but although I found it to be the cleverest production that I had seen on the subject, it contained nothing which had not previously passed through my own mind. Just when I was finishing the essay, its author called upon me, and we had a long conversation. He stated that he had pointed out a theory on the subject, by the adoption of which I could say, that I renounced my sentiment. I admitted that he had, if I could

bring my mind to embrace it; but that it appeared to me to require an amount of mental reservation which I could not submit to practice. The theory is this, viz., to view the maxim, that like produces like, as applicable to human nature, abstracted both from holiness on the one hand, and depravity on the other. But to adopt this view, is to ignore both the admitted truth, that holy Adam would have produced a holy offspring, and likewise the fact, that a depraved parentage produces a depraved offspring. To such a theory, therefore, it was impossible that I could accede.

On the following morning, I met the committee. My document was again read, and I was asked whether I still adhered to it; to which I of course answered, Yes. The gentleman with whom I had conversed the preceding evening, then read part of his essay, and the chairman also read a paper, containing sentiments similar to those to which I have replied in the previous page; but no discussion was to be allowed. Instead of this, I was assailed by questions in rapid succession, and from two or three persons at the same time. I was told what I believed, and when I stated that I believed no such thing, the lie was given to me direct. Thus the meeting went on for one hour and a half; and after having been badgered for one half of the time, I was at length relieved by the termination of the meeting just as it began, except by the addition of wounded feelings. I may remark, too, as a singular circumstance, that the members even of this committee were not agreed amongst themselves, as to the correctness of the Wesleyan doctrine of original sin, for while one of them affirmed it, another denied it, and maintained the sentiments of Dr. Payne.

Two days afterwards, the report of the committee was read at the District Meeting; but a copy, even of the sentence contained in this report, I was not permitted to possess, although I made a personal application for it a few days after the meeting. Its nature, however, was such, that I must have ceased

to be a *man*, and have become a mere *thing*, to be dealt with at pleasure, if I could for a moment have submitted to it, in a free country like this. Considerable pressure was employed in order to induce the meeting to pass the report. They were told that they *must* adopt it as their own, and unmistakable intimations were given as to the course which the Conference expected them to pursue. At length the adoption of the report was moved by an erratic supernumerary, and then seconded by Mr. Thomas, who, however, apologized for so doing, by stating that he had been secretly urged to it by his right hand brother, almost as honourable as himself.

At the commencement of the District Meeting, Mr. Thomas posted at the chapel doors a large placard, announcing his letters to me. Of this, however, the chairman took no notice whatever. After the vote in my case had been taken, one of the ministers rose to suggest, whether the meeting ought not to express some opinion relative to the dishonourable attack which had been made upon me during my pledged silence; but the chairman at once interposed, and would not allow of any official expression whatever on the subject. He knew full well that if he permitted this, he would bring himself into collision with the authority which had almost imperatively requested the Editor of the Magazine to sanction the conduct of Mr. Thomas; and, therefore, such a step must not be taken. He could harangue eloquently on the duty of inflicting pains and penalties, when he knew that the performance of such a duty would ingratiate him with the ruling power; but when another duty devolved upon him, the performance of which might involve his deposition from the chairmanship—that duty, although called for by every principle of common justice, could be abandoned to the winds.

On my return home from the District Meeting—labouring under a deep sense of the injustice that I had met with, and with feelings more easily imagined than expressed—my first

thought was, to send in my resignation to the chairman, and to seek ministerial employment elsewhere. A little reflection, however, together with the advice of some of my friends, induced me to pause, and to defer such a step, at least till the ensuing Conference. Several of the most respectable officers in the circuit expressed deep disapprobation of the proceedings of the District Meeting, and some of them seemed quite sure that the Conference would never sanction such proceedings. But I knew too well the kind of material of which the Conference is composed, to expect any more justice from that body, than I had experienced from the District Meeting; and although I deferred to the opinions and wishes of my friends in this matter, I strongly suspected that they would find their confidence misplaced.

At the ensuing June Quarterly Meeting of the circuit, a memorial to the Conference, expressive of the circuit's high appreciation of my character and ministry, and earnestly soliciting my re-appointment, was unanimously adopted. This memorial, of which I had no previous knowledge whatever, the two circuit stewards presented in person to the chairman of the District, and from the apparent kindness and good-will which he manifested, they returned home in the full assurance that their request would be successful. In this assurance, however, I could not participate. My little acquaintance with ecclesiasticism had taught me another lesson. I have known both chairmen and superintendents who, although as kind as men could be in their personal intercourse with others, have yet, in their official proceedings, been the veriest tyrants that ever lived. Even Bishop Bonner himself was exceedingly kind and affable, and in his intercourse with Protestant heretics, he would entreat and even weep over them; but when he could not bend them to his will, he would torture and burn them nevertheless.

On the assembling of Conference, the proceedings in my case accorded with my previous expectations. The District report

and my documents were read, but the circuit memorial was not read, and from the manner in which the mention of it was treated, I saw at once that the voice of the circuit was to be regarded as a mere nullity. A committee was appointed, and before which I appeared for about a quarter of an hour. In answer to a question, I stated that I firmly embraced all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, as defined by Mr. Wesley, and that the only point on which I differed from Mr. Wesley, so far as I understood it, was in the extent of the moral designs of redemption; that while he carried those designs to the extermination of personal depravity, I carried them a step further, viz., to the cutting off also of the entail of depravity, since a depravity that is admitted not to exist, cannot be entailed. One of the ex-Presidents then asked me if I believed in the transmission of an accidental quality? I begged that he would explain what he meant by an accidental quality; and the explanation was, a quality not essential to human nature, but superinduced. I replied that I did believe in it, for in that sense depravity is an accidental quality, and I believed in the transmission of depravity. He said no more. Another ex-President, however, asked me if I believed that an entirely sanctified parentage would produced a depraved offspring? I replied, that that, in my judgment, was a contradiction, since that which does not exist, cannot be transmitted. "Never mind the contradiction," said he, "do you believe it?" And I answered, No, Sir, I do not. I was then dismissed.

Such was the nature of my intercourse with the reverend committee. Twelve or fourteen theologians, including five or six ex-Presidents, and the only business they had with me, was to ask three or four questions, which I had already frequently answered, and to tell me not to mind contradictions, but to believe them! Had I been arraigned before a bench of ecclesiastical magistrates, seeking only material for judgment, the course pursued was precisely that which I should have expected; but

as I was before a committee of the most learned divines in Methodism—fathers and brethren too—I certainly did think that it would not have been beneath their dignity to have pointed out in what the fallacy of my argument, or of my replies, consisted, and not to have abandoned me to ecclesiastical heresy, without a single attempt to set me right. A Christian course like this, however, was a course which, I suspect, they were too prudent to attempt. To condemn a book which some of them had never read, and to pronounce a given sentiment to be at variance with Mr. Wesley, were an easy task to any one, and quite in character with the material of which the committee was composed; but to shew that my conclusion is not a legitimate consequence of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification, was a task which, I apprehend, they knew full well that they could never perform; and hence the instruction, that in order to be an orthodox Wesleyan, I must believe contradictions!

In a subsequent interview with another member of the committee, and an ex-President too, he admitted, that although he had joined in the condemnation of my book, he had never read it. And then a fourth member of the committee, and one who took a prominent part in its proceedings, was one of those ministers to whom I had committed my manuscript, who advised me to publish it, and who had stated that, in his judgment, its publication would be a benefit to the reading public! This, however, is not the only instance of a similar character; for every one of those ministers who either advised me to publish the book, or have expressed approval of it, have either turned round upon me, or have preserved a dead silence. The reason of all this, no one who understands the Wesleyan Conference, can for a moment doubt.

On the introduction of the report of the committee into Conference, I saw, that although I had engaged to hold my opinion on the point in question in entire abeyance, this was not enough;

and from the discussion that ensued, it was evident that nothing awaited me but another year of painful suspense, accompanied by an imposed silent endurance of attacks from various quarters. To such terms I was resolved not to submit. I had had a sufficiency of this kind of experience already; and, therefore, I determined to become a free man, whatever might be the results in other respects. I accordingly terminated the unpleasant discussion, by presenting my resignation, and thus breaking the fetters which had become too galling to be any longer endured.

After my resignation, the President stated, that when I could bring my sentiments within the doctrinal standards of Methodism, the Conference would be glad to receive me again. This, no doubt, is very liberal and very generous. When I can bring my mind to believe that a thing can be and not be at the same time—when I can bring my mind to believe two manifestly irreconcileable propositions—when I can bring my mind to believe that to contradict a man who contradicts himself, is to contradict the scriptures; the Conference will be but too happy to receive me again! Very likely they will; and I can faithfully promise, that when I can bring my mind to embrace such a class of absurdities, I shall be prepared to perform penance barefoot at the door of the Conference; and then there can be no question that I shall be re-admitted as a worthy member of an equally worthy body of full-believing ecclesiastics, and who have never been exceeded for their extraordinary ability both in straining out gnats and in swallowing camels.

Having now closed my remarks with reference to official proceedings, there are some other matters to which I wish to call attention. I have been publicly accused of heresy, and of propagating a dangerous doctrine. Such an accusation, if it possessed even a particle of truth in any proper sense of the terms, would be a serious affair; but I challenge any man liv-

ing to adduce the proof. On the subjects of original sin and entire sanctification, I have adopted precisely the views of Mr. Wesley, because I believe them to be scriptural; and I appeal to my chapters on those subjects in "Man Contemplated," for a complete refutation of the charge in question. A charge of heresy, as I have already observed, is easily made. It is the common refuge of weakness, illiberality, and ignorance. St. Paul was accused of heresy by the Jewish church. Luther was accused of heresy by the Romish church. And Wesley, too, was accused of heresy by the most pious and evangelical clergy of his day. But what respect do we now give to such an accusation, or to the Christian intelligence of those who preferred it? With regard to Wesley in particular, I find, in looking over his works, that his doctrine of entire sanctification was pronounced *a new doctrine—an error—a delusion—a dishonouring of Christ—a setting aside of the need of a Mediator—a Popish doctrine—offensive—odious—terrible—and calculated to excite the hatred and fear of any reasonable creature.* Mr. Wesley himself, speaking of the hostility manifested to this doctrine, observes,—"What need of all this heat about it, this violence, I had almost said, fury of opposition?" Vol. iii. p. 351.

Such was the manner in which the venerable Wesley was treated, because he developed and defended the doctrine of spotless holiness, contrary to the universal sentiment of the times. There is this difference, however, between the origin of the accusations preferred against Wesley, and the origin of those which are preferred against me: Mr. Wesley denied, in toto, some of the commonly received Calvinian doctrines of the day; whereas, the huge offence for which I have been so rudely treated, consists not in a denial of any Methodist fundamental doctrine whatever, but, in consistently admitting, and argumentatively maintaining, the important consequences to the interests of holiness, which one of those doctrines involves, and which are expressly recognized in one of our own hymns already cited.

In other words, I am accused and denounced for maintaining, that the entail of sin, as well as the commission of sin, is contrary to the will of God; and that the Methodism of John Wesley, in accordance with the gospel of the Redeemer, provides for the complete and universal destruction of this ungodly entail. Such is the sentiment which is now pronounced a *heresy* and a *dangerous doctrine*, even by some of those who profess to be zealous for the spread of scriptural holiness throughout the land! Dangerous it is, I admit, to the wide-spread empire of inbred sin; but in what other respects it is dangerous, I have yet to learn. Have I ever taught that the unholy are not to be sanctified? that that which is born of the flesh is not to be born again? or that the sinner is not required to repent? Every sensible and candid man ought to know, that I teach exactly the reverse of all this. Do I not moreover teach, as expressly as a man can teach, that all moral and spiritual good is the result of the atonement, and of the influence of the Holy Spirit; and that every individual, to the end of time, however pure he may be, will have to employ the provisions of the gospel for the maintenance of that purity? The charges of heresy and dangerous doctrine, therefore, when applied to me, are entitled to just as much respect as they were when applied to Mr. Wesley.

There is another point of still deeper importance, to which I wish to call attention, and which, if I mistake not, will fix the charge of heresy elsewhere than at my door, viz., the manifest disposition amongst modern Wesleyan ministers to fritter away, and in some cases positively to deny, not only the Wesleyan doctrine of the transmission of human depravity, but also that of entire sanctification; and thus to patronize Socinianism on the one hand, and the necessary indwelling of sin on the other. Both these facts have come out in the various letters which I have received from several ministers, and the conversations which I have held with several others. One of them tells me that *he does not believe in the doctrine of the transmis-*

sion of sin; another states that *sin must continue to the end of life;* a third affirms that *the Wesleyan doctrine of the transmission of depravity is a fallacy;* a fourth declares that *he does not believe in Mr. Wesley's views, either of depravity or of entire sanctification:* and a fifth tells me that *we have departed too much from the doctrine of the "flesh," which lies at the bottom of Calvinism—that "slay the dire root and seed of sin," is not theology—and that the doctrine of the transmission of depravity is pure jargon.*

Such are some of the expressions of sentiment which have been communicated to me by those ministers who have sought to overturn my conclusion. And then these sentiments have proceeded not from inferior men, but in some instances from high quarters, and from the contributors to modern Wesleyan literature! And is it to be supposed that these five gentlemen are the only ministers in Methodism who hold the above sentiments? Is it to be conceived that I have, by sheer accident, met with the *whole* of this class? On the contrary, I have reason to believe that such sentiments are tolerably extensive in Methodism, and that they are gradually spreading, secretly of course, and under forms of expression calculated to prevent suspicion, while at the same time they are not less calculated to sap the foundation of the Wesleyan doctrine, both of moral depravity and of entire sanctification. The *London Review* almost, if not entirely, ignores the doctrine of entire sanctification; and one of its chief contributors doubts whether such a doctrine has ever been realized. One of the works recently issued by the *Book Room* likewise ignores this doctrine, and gives a definition of it which the Antinomian opponents of Wesley and Fletcher would have gladly accepted. The Shilling Magazine exhorts its readers to ponder well some "Letters" which deny the Wesleyan doctrine of human depravity, and the author of which states that Wesley's definitions of that doctrine are to be understood figuratively. And then it is well known that Wes-

leyan pulpits, at the present day, seldom give any certain sound, but deal in the vaguest generalities on the subject of entire sanctifica ion. Let all these facts be taken into consideration, and no one can wonder at the hostility which has been manifested to what is called my theory, especially as my theory distinctly recognizes the Wesleyan doctrine of original sin, and is expressly based upon that of entire sanctification. Two years ago, I supposed that Wesleyan ministers were all one on the fundamental doctrines of Methodism. This assumed unity has frequently been the subject of boast, and I have boasted of it myself; but recent correspondence and conversation with the ministers have convinced me that they are anything but one on some of these fundamentals; and that with regard to the transmission of moral depravity, and sanctification especially, some deny them altogether, and others fritter them away. Previously, I had supposed that the works of Mr. Wesley and the Poll Deed, would for ever be a barrier against any doctrinal apostacy in Methodism; but I now see that Mr. Thomas' principle of a *figurative interpretation* of Mr. Wesley's doctrine of depravity, will as easily dispose of all the other doctrines, as it disposes of that; and in the announcement of this principle, Mr. T. has evidently the concurrence not only of those numerous ministerial friends who counselled him to publish his Letters, but likewise that of the Wesleyan Magazine. These facts, to a mind at all alive to the stealthy inroads of apostacy, cannot but be regarded as presenting an ominous aspect for the future of Methodism; and they sufficiently shew that both Mr. Wesley's works and the Poll Deed, notwithstanding the fuss that is publicly made of them, can be set aside whenever the sentiments of Wesley are felt to be inconvenient and unpalatable. These considerations have given me great uneasiness, as I regard them as but the commencement of what may lead to a melancholy end; and they have had not a little influence in determining my resignation. The grand original design of Methodism was to

sweep moral depravity from the face of the earth, and to deluge the world with spotless holiness; but when this design is virtually ignored, as it is already to some extent, and Wesleyan ministers plead for the continuance of sin, as many of them now do; the glory of Methodism will be extinct, and both Mr. Wesley's works and the Poll Deed, will become defunct documents. I pray that such a catastrophe may be averted, whatever may become of me.

With regard to the Poll Deed, and its alleged antagonism to the sentiment that provision is made in the economy of redemption for the cutting off the entail of moral depravity, it may also be proper to make some remarks. If the Poll Deed involves a patronization of the necessary continuance of the entail of sin to the end of time, no extraordinary sagacity is required to foretell its fate. But I do not believe a word of this allegation. The Poll Deed recognizes the doctrines of Mr. Wesley, and, therefore, it recognizes the legitimate consequences of those doctrines; and as the termination of the entail of depravity is the legitimate and inevitable consequence of Mr. Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification, the Poll Deed recognizes the one just as well as the other. If, however, it be contended, that the Poll Deed forbids the consequence, while it recognizes the premises, what would have been my position if I had adopted the counsel of some of my ministerial correspondents, and rejected the Wesleyan doctrine both of original sin and of entire sanctification? And what is the bearing of that Deed on those ministers who have already done this? Does the Poll Deed prohibit the legitimate consequence of its doctrines, and yet allow of the denial of the doctrines themselves? These, I apprehend, are questions which the Conference will never attempt to answer. The fact is, that the Poll Deed can be made to forbid or to allow anything that the Conference chooses. If the Methodist people ask for certain privileges which the Conference disapproves, the Poll Deed forbids

those privileges; but if it suits the Conference to retain a minister more than three years at the same place, the Poll Deed can be disposed of, or evaded at pleasure.

The ground which the Wesleyan Conference has taken throughout the whole of this affair, was, to me, as unexpected as it is surprising. The conclusion which I have deduced from the doctrine of entire sanctification, and which I have presented in a syllogistic form, is either valid or it is invalid; and so far as the Wesleyan Conference might think proper to take notice of it, I supposed that I had to deal with a body of men of sufficient liberality and candour, either to admit its validity, or fairly to point out its invalidity, especially as I stated that the moment its invalidity was shewn, I would at once give it up. To this day, however, the argument remains unrefuted. The Conference itself has never attempted to refute it, but has disposed of it just as dogmatically as the church of Rome disposed of the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith. The position, that "to contradict Mr. Wesley is to contradict the scriptures," is now announced to the Methodist Conference as the standard of orthodoxy. Such a position cuts off at one stroke all appeal to the sacred oracles, and places nine-tenths of the Protestant world under the ban of Christian heresy! Such is the course of proceeding which has been adopted in disposing of the sentiment which I have enunciated! I strongly suspect, however, that such a course, however agreeable to the church maxims of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, will not be satisfactory in the latter half of the nineteenth century, either to the Protestant public generally, or to the Methodist public in particular; and I strongly suspect, too, that sooner or later the Wesleyan Conference will be compelled, by sheer logical consistency, either to accept my conclusion, or to renounce their own fundamental doctrine of entire sanctification.

The major proposition of my syllogism, viz., that which does not exist cannot be entailed or transmitted, is a self-evident

truth. What human being ever heard of the entail of an estate which did not exist? Or what sane mind ever conceived of the transmission of a nonentity? And yet belief of this kind is now required by the Methodist Conference! Such a dogma, in my judgment, is more absurd than even that of transubstantiation, and its self-evident contradiction is obviously more manifest.

The minor proposition, viz., that in entirely sanctified parents moral depravity does not exist, is the doctrine unequivocally taught by Mr. Wesley himself, as I have already shewn, by several express statements from his works; and no one can doubt that a considerable number of his hymns likewise are full of this sentiment. The conclusion, therefore, which I have deduced from these two propositions, is, both to my own mind, and to that of several others, one of the most inevitable that was ever deduced from premises; nor do I believe that it can ever be overthrown, except by a denial of the minor proposition. Let the doctrine of entire sanctification, as taught by Mr. Wesley, be rejected, and I at once admit that my conclusion falls to the ground; but to admit this doctrine, and yet to deny the obvious conclusion, seems to me to be a piece of absurdity of which no one, except a theologian trammelled by a mere human creed, would ever be guilty. More than twelve months ago, I stated in the *Watchman*, that the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification, and the cessation of the entail of moral depravity, stand or fall together, and I challenged any theologian in Methodism to shew the contrary; but to this moment the challenge has never been met; and I strongly believe that there is a general conviction in the Conference that it never can be met. Even Mr. Thomas, in his published Letters, instead of attempting to refute it, satisfies himself by saying that if entire sanctification involves such a consequence, it is high time that that doctrine should be reviewed; and the *Watchman* itself, in a recent article, suggests, that possibly the Con-

ference may rule, that entire sanctification is something different from what Mr. Wesley has defined it to be. The denial of entire sanctification, too, by several of my ministerial correspondents, clearly involves the conviction referred to. At present the Conference, influenced either by a dislike to the inevitable consequence of its own doctrine, or by some indefinite and irrational dread of sacrificing its hold of chapel property, is, like the church of Rome imposing a dogma, alike contradictory to both philosophy and divinity, logic and common sense. Such a state of things cannot continue. The Conference must either fairly give up the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification, or accept of the necessary consequence which I have ventured to point out. There is no other consistent alternative. And I have no doubt, that sooner or later, the Conference will be compelled to adopt either the one or the other of these unpalatable courses. England is not Rome; nor are the Methodist people to be permanently imposed upon by manifest absurdity, as the perfection of Christian faith.

That a Christian church ought to have some standard of fundamental scripture doctrines, I shall be one of the first to maintain; and I am prepared to maintain, too, that no person has a right to continue in any church, the fundamental doctrines of which he cannot accept. But when a church, in addition to its fundamental doctrines, adopts also the multitudinous, in some instances demonstrably erroneous, and in others contradictory sentiments of an uninspired human being, and announces, that to contradict this man is to contradict the scriptures, it becomes another question. I embrace freely and unreservedly all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, as defined by Mr. Wesley; but I cannot subscribe to all the sentiments put forth in his Notes and Sermons, nor have I ever met with a man of any intelligence who can; and yet these Notes, and the four volumes of Sermons, without a single authorized *exception*, and including even the resurrection of brutes, the li-

teral falling of the heavenly bodies to the earth, and the commencement of the millennium in 1836,—constitute the creed of the Wesleyan Conference, and are all alike recognized by the Poll Deed! To avoid coming in collision with such a creed, if a man dares to examine for himself at all, is utterly impossible; and the Conference claims the sole right to decide, when, how, and as they please, on the criminality of such collision, not by shewing that the offending brother is in error, but simply by declaring, *ex-officio*, that he contradicts Mr. Wesley, and that, therefore, he contradicts the scriptures! The terror which hangs over freedom of thought, arising from this state of things, and the despotism which the Conference exercises with regard to the intellectual independence of its individual members, may be easily imagined, and is, indeed, not unfrequently acknowledged even by some of the ministers themselves. One of the most venerable and learned ministers in Methodism, and who has himself incurred the displeasure of Conference oftener than once, by his noble independence, stated, not many months ago, in reference to the official proceedings against my book, "*There is no freedom of thought in Methodism;*" and in a letter which I received from a minister just before last Conference, the writer observes, "*I am very jealous of any liberty of thought in a body like ours.*" That freedom of thought, indeed, is not tolerated by the Wesleyan Conference, is the general conviction, not only amongst other Protestant bodies, but also amongst masses of the Wesleyans themselves. It is this characteristic of Conference Methodism that has led to so many fearful disruptions, that has partially ruined its popularity throughout the country, and rendered it an object of extensive dislike. Nor is there any prospect that this despotism is likely to come to an end; on the contrary, there are measures in operation which are calculated and intended to increase and strengthen it. The Home Mission movement, little as it may be suspected by some, and especially

the liquidation of chapel debts, and the appropriation of the income to the ministry, are both of this character. The effect of these measures, managed by a body like the Wesleyan Conference, which concocts many of its schemes in secret, and sustained by those persons who will adhere to it, whatever course it adopts, will before long place that body in a position of power and independence, against which no remonstrance and no movement on the part of the people can be of any avail. There can be little doubt, therefore, that in the course of years, the Wesleyan Conference will become one of the most despotic and tyrannical systems of ecclesiasticism that this country has ever witnessed.

It has been generally supposed, that whatever the Conference may become in other respects, it will always be compelled to maintain the doctrines of the gospel as taught by Mr. Wesley. This, however, I strongly suspect, is a mistake. I have already given evidence that the doctrine of original sin, as defined by Mr. Wesley, is, by several of the ministers expressly denied, and a mere negation of good substituted in its stead. The doctrine of entire sanctification, too, is denied by not a few, and by others it is frittered away. And when Wesleyan ministers have begun to pronounce the doctrine of the hereditary transmission of depravity a *fallacy* and *pure jargon*, and to tell us that some amount of moral evil must remain in the believer until death, it is clear that an apostacy on these points has already commenced. The figurative mode of interpreting Mr. Wesley's definitions also, and which is, in fact, sanctioned by the Magazine, sufficiently shews that although Mr. Wesley's phraseology may continue to be employed, its real signification can be disposed of with the greatest ease. Nor have the Wesleyan people any means of resisting this doctrinal apostacy. The creed of Methodism, it must be remembered, is the interpretation which the Conference gives of Mr. Wesley's interpretation of the scriptures. It must be remembered, too, that the

Conference is supreme on all questions both of legislation and administration; and as, moreover, the apostacy has commenced in high quarters, no official notice either will be or can be taken of it. For the Conference, therefore, under these circumstances, to make a show of extraordinary zeal for Wesleyan orthodoxy, and to charge me with unsoundness on the doctrine of original sin, constitute a piece of consummate jesuitism, intended to divert public attention from the real question at issue, and to keep out of sight the ominous facts already stated. Every sensible and honest man in Methodism knows that I contend for the doctrine of original sin in the natural sense in which Mr. Wesley has defined it. What I object to, so far as this doctrine is concerned, is the modern figurative interpretation of Mr. Wesley's expressions, by which several of the ministers are attempting to reduce original sin to a mere negation of moral good, or, in other words, to the *tabula rasa* of a Socinianized philosophy. To blink the truth on this subject, however, accords best with the object which the Conference has in view. The church of Rome increased in zeal for orthodoxy just in proportion as her own apostacy advanced; but it was an orthodoxy of her own construction, and at the shrine of which thousands of reputed heretics have had to suffer and burn.

The sacred scriptures are the source of theological truth, just as the heavens are the source of astronomical truth; and as a man must study the heavens in order to become an astronomer, so he must study the scriptures in order to become a theologian. But of what use is it to study the scriptures at all, if we are to be told beforehand, by human authority, to what conclusions we are to come? Is the imposition of such ecclesiastical fetters consistent with the fundamental principle of Protestantism? Is it not rather the very quintessence of Popery? Under such circumstances, a man might as well go to Rome at once, and thus surrender both his judgment and conscience to the dictation of others. The great leading doctrines of Methodism I

embrace with a firmness not inferior to that of any other ministet; not because Mr. Wesley teaches them, but because the scriptures teach them; but being required to submit my judgment and conscience to the Conferential interpretations of Mr. Wesley on all questions of biblical exegesis, I have demurred, and rather than be trammelled by such antichristian fetters, I have chosen to sacrifice my position in a body which imposes them.

As I have been arraigned three times before Wesleyan tribunals on the subject of my book, and in a manner which has appeared to me to be a mockery both to Christianity and to common sense; I now, in my turn, arraign the Wesleyan Conference before the bar of the reading and reflecting public. In the first place, in relation to the manner in which the whole affair has been conducted, I accuse that body of an unchristian, an unprincipled, a dishonourable, and an ungentlemanly course of conduct. And in the second place, I again challenge all the doctors and theologians in Methodism, to refute the conclusion to which I have arrived on the question in dispute, except by an abandonment of one or more of their own Poll Deed and fundamental tenets. I thus fix them on the horns of a dilemma, and the moment they can make their escape, I will admit myself to have been mistaken. But I suspect that they will deem silence their best policy. As men, however, laying claim even to the lowest degree of common consistency, they are under an obvious necessity to grapple with the subject, and either to admit my conclusion, or to refute it. Ecclesiastical pains, penalties, and fulminations, the ordinary weapons of church bigotry, can neither affect me, nor shield them any longer. They must now descend from their ex-cathedra and dictatorial position, and deal with the unpalatable question on the common ground of fair and legitimate argument. This is clearly indispensable. The Methodist people have a right to require it; and, unless they have become as tame and submissive as the priest ridden *serfs of the papacy*, they will require it.

The sentiment, to the re-consideration of which I have devoted a great part of the preceding pages, has occupied my attention for now nearly seven years; and after viewing it from every conceivable standpoint, communicating with some of the most eminent Wesleyan ministers on the subject, and carefully weighing every objection that has been urged against it, I am thoroughly convinced that it is the inevitable consequence of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification; nor has either the Conference, or any individual minister, so far as my knowledge extends, ever stated, or even attempted to shew, that it is not. Although, however, I am thus convinced of its truth, both on Wesleyan and scripture premises, I have never deemed it my duty to introduce it into the pulpit; nor have I, with the exception of the few instances already referred to, ever introduced it as a subject for conversation in any private company, however select. I regard it to be my duty, as a Christian minister and a biblical student, to publish, through the medium of the press, every truth which I believe is calculated to promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom; but to introduce every such truth into the pulpit, is another question, the decision of which must depend on circumstances. I hold that no minister of any church, provided he has the opportunity of leaving that church, has a right to advance in its pulpits, any sentiment to which the constituted authorities of that church object. This view may be thought by some to be extreme; but it has for years been the settled dictate of my own judgment, and if I must err, I would rather err on this side than on the other. No good can be accomplished by making the pulpit the arena of controversy. The time will come, I have no doubt, when every Christian church will sweep the fatalistic and sin-patronizing dogma of the necessary entail of moral depravity both from its creeds and its pulpits, and when its sanctuaries will resound with utterances of holiness to which we are at present unaccustomed; but till then, the press, and

not the pulpit, is the proper medium through which to fight the doctrinal battles involved in the development and maintenance of redeeming truth.

The question has often been asked,—How is it that the Christianity of this country, notwithstanding its immense machinery, and the enormous expense of that machinery, makes so little progress? How is it that, notwithstanding the thousands of ministers, and other evangelical agents, the ratio of the unregenerate to the regenerate part of the population, is continually increasing? These are questions of momentous importance, and the state of things which gives rise to them must, to a thorough Christian mind, be distressing and alarming to the last degree. But have these questions ever been investigated with that heartfelt and persevering seriousness which the yearning spirit of Christianity requires? On the contrary, have they not usually been disposed of by some general remarks indicative of an indisposition to pursue the solemn but unpalatable enquiry? Even Wesleyan Methodism herself, as represented by her exclusive Conference of ministers, never ventures to moot the subject; while her ever-increasing financial affairs are almost her all-absorbing theme. No doubt there is a reason for this, not confessed, indeed, but nevertheless real. Methodism, although loudly professing to be raised up to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land, is annually pouring a greater amount of moral depravity into the country than she is the means of removing; and further, as a general rule, just in proportion as her wealth and her ministers are increasing, her spirituality and her numerical increase are diminishing. She set out with the profession of being a great revival, and revivalism has been the chief source of her increase; but now, the Conference has given directions that revivalists are to be excluded from her pulpits. The fact is—whatever pretensions the Conference may put forth—that Wesleyan Methodism is sinking down to the common level of a wealthy, respectable,

and secularized Christianity, and of this many of her own members have for some time been painfully convinced. The questions above proposed, therefore, are not likely to receive much attention from the Wesleyan Conference, and less so now than formerly. I submit, however, to the candid and serious consideration of those devout and earnest Christians, who are untrammelled by ecclesiastical dogmas, whether the common notion of the necessary entail of sin to the end of time, and its natural results, do not furnish the solution to the melancholy state of things above referred to? For if it be maintained that infancy, to the end of the world, must be characterized by moral depravity, on what known principle can holiness ever obtain an ascendancy, to say nothing of a universal spread? The theory of an individual conversion, after children have grown up in sin to an adult age, the history of the Christian church, in her brightest periods, shews to be utterly inadequate to the designs of redemption. Besides, so long as it is maintained that children must be born in sin throughout all time, however holy their parents are, who does not see that one important stimulus to parental holiness is completely destroyed, and that parents have no resource but that of resigning themselves to the melancholy fatality of being the divinely appointed instruments of continually deluging the world with moral corruption? It is true, indeed, that churches have recently awaked to the vast importance of employing a religious education to counteract the depraved tendencies of youth and of infancy; but what has been the result? In the immense majority even of the most favourable cases, the education has failed altogether in its regenerating design; and only in a very few isolated instances has it been more than extremely partial. The means employed within the last sixty years for the conversion of this country, and for the religious education of the young, have been far more abundant than those of any former time; and yet during this highly-favoured period, while the

number of church members has increased only about one million, the population has increased more than eight millions: so that there are now seven millions more of unconverted persons in this Christian country than there were sixty years ago! It is clear, therefore, that on the theory even of combining a Christian education with individual conversion, there is no reason to believe that the religious condition either of this country, or of the world at large, will ever be materially different from what it is. That something more, then, is required, cannot be doubted; nor can it be doubted that the sin-hating and omnipotent Saviour of the world has made ample provision for the accomplishment of his own designs; and I submit that a moral improvement in the propagation of the race—the cutting off the entail of sin by parental holiness—and the production of a regenerate offspring, are the *sine qua non* to the accomplishment of the Redeemer's purposes relative to the moral condition of the world. These, together with the conversion of the ungodly, and a religious education, are the means which, I submit, redeeming power and grace have provided for the regeneration of the entire human race, and the utter destruction of moral evil from the face of the earth. Instead, therefore, of teaching the Christ-dishonouring fatalism of a necessary propagation of sin, let the truth, alike dictated both by scripture and reason, be inculcated both on churches in general, and on parents in particular, that the Son of God can destroy the entail of moral depravity just as well as forgive actual transgression; and they will feel an amount of responsibility to which at present they are strangers. Let the truth be taught, that on the very same principle that no one "can bring a clean thing out of an unclean," so no one can bring an *unclean* thing out of a *clean*; and its importance cannot fail to be recognized and deeply felt. And let the doctrine be enforced, that Christ has made provision for the propagation of a holy seed, and that, consequently, parents are respon-

sible for the depravity of their offspring;; and the results, in the progress of holiness, and the enlargement of the church of God will, in the course of years, be exhibited on a scale the most impressive and influential. But let these momentous scripture truths continue to be ignored and scowled upon, and let the sin-patronizing dogma of the necessary entail of moral depravity to the end of time continue to be inculcated, and I confess that I have no hope either for the world's regeneration, or for the accomplishment of the predicted glory of the Christian church.

THE END.

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